

## THE REBUKE.

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### THE REBUKE.

*(See Plate.)*

THE noblest ideal of the painter is the striking and touching expression of moral truth. A picture which has been painted with this ideal in view, needs no interpretation. It appeals directly to the heart. It leaves its impress on the conscience. Such is the Scripture piece of *Emile Signol*, which *Ellis* has so exquisitely engraved for our present number. Look at the form of the Saviour, full of dignity, firmness and conscious power; look at his countenance beaming with goodness, mildness and pardoning love. Is there aught in it to inspire terror and shuddering abasement? Surely not. Why then does the penitent shrink and crouch down in his presence, as if awaiting a sentence of annihilation. It is not because the Saviour is stern

and austere. It is not because he has uttered a word or even cast a glance of reproof. No; but it is because the conscience of the penitent is uttering thunders within her own bosom. It is because shame and contrition weigh heavily upon her heart and bow down her head. When she looks upon the face of the Saviour, she is ready to prostrate herself in the dust, and, in the depth of her humiliation, to kiss the ground whereon he treads. In that divine countenance she can read and feel "how awful goodness is."

The painter who successfully embodies such ideas and emotions as these, paints for immortality. He will continue to have admirers so long as there is a heart beating in the human bosom.

## THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN.

BY MRS. EMMA C. EMBURY.

Among the variety of forms under which the subject of human rights has been discussed, it seems strange that no one has attempted to define with accuracy and precision, the rights of that portion of the inhabitants of earth who are destined soon to jostle us aside in the race of life. The *claims* of children we are all willing to allow, but their *rights* we rarely take into consideration. The laws by which they are governed, though founded principally on the immutable basis of moral truth, are yet so modified by the caprice of those to whom has been deputed their execution, that their original meaning is often entirely lost. Every parent is his own commentator upon that system of laws; and it frequently happens in this, as in the tribunals of public justice, that, while mooted some trifling point of legal subtlety, the equity of the case is forgotten.

There is no want of parental love in the world, for God has wisely implanted in our bosoms an instinct which awakens at the first feeble wail of infancy. Well is it for the creatures entrusted to our care, that we do share this instinct with the beasts that perish. Well is it that a law of our being regulates our primary duties to the helpless little ones who come into the world to be a weariness to our hearts, even if they be not a burden upon our hands! Well is it that we are not left to the cold calculations of reason in our first consciousness of these new duties and new cares! But the mere animal instinct which belongs to all, differs as widely from the true, devoted, disinterested *sentiment* of parental tenderness, as does the selfish policy of the mouthing demagogue from pure, elevated, enlightened patriotism. Children may be beloved, and yet may suffer great injustice and cruel wrong at the hands of those whose privilege it is to protect them from harm; for it is difficult to say, whether utter neglect is worse than the evils which grow out of a mistaken sense of duty, a vague and indistinct idea of their rights, and a belief in the necessity of certain rules, which perhaps never existed save in the mind of an injudicious parent.

One of the first rights which children are disposed to claim, is that of being instructed and enlightened. As soon as they begin to take note of objects, their inquiring looks tell what their imperfect organs of speech fail to utter; and as soon as they can frame language for their thoughts, they ask questions. Every thing is new and strange to them; objects of curiosity and interest surround them on every side, and they demand the information which is best adapted to their unfolding faculties. But how do we generally respond to this claim? The guardians of

infancy are usually selected with infinitely less care than we should bestow upon the qualifications of a cook, since a certain degree of skill is requisite to the proper pampering of our appetites, while any one is supposed to be capable of "tending baby." That poor scapegoat of a family, known as the "little servant-girl," or a nursemaid, who is supposed to perform the responsible duties of a foster-mother, just in proportion to the amount of her wages, is usually entrusted to imprint first impressions upon the waxen minds of our little ones. And surely the child whose dawning intellect is clouded by the mists of ignorance and folly, through this gross neglect of one of a parent's highest privileges, has been despoiled of one of its most solemn rights. Years may elapse ere the thick darkness which is thus allowed to settle on the infant mind may be dissipated: years of weariness to the child, of anxiety to the parent; of self-distrust to the one, and of self-reproach to the other.

Let us recur to the scenes of our own childhood, and endeavour to recall some of the moments in which light was poured into our own souls. What do we remember most vividly? It is the precepts of the father to whose knee we climbed when the toils of the day were over, and the weary man sought rest in the bosom of domestic peace; it is the counsel of the mother who never silenced by rebuke the inquiring voice; of the mother who threw aside book or work at the call of her child, and seated on the floor amid our heap of infant toys, would share our sports, while she imparted the golden treasures of daily wisdom. How futile are all the attempts of modern utility, all the schemes of "Philosophy made easy," &c., all the new methods of cheating children into the rudiments of science, compared with the varied and desultory but impressive instructions of the judicious parent, who, while possessing sufficient youthfulness of feeling to enjoy with her children the game of romps so essential to the overflow of their animal spirits, has yet sufficient tact and wisdom to seize the moment of quiet thoughtfulness to impress on their ductile minds the lessons of truth. Yes, children have a right to be instructed. They come to us fresh and pure from the hands of the Almighty, leaving on their souls the impress of His signet. It is for us to unfold the unwritten scroll, to inscribe it with the characters of moral truth, and to trace on it not only the oracles of nature, but also the interpretation of her dark sayings.

Another right which children possess in as great a degree as their elders, is that of being governed by fixed rules of conduct. What should we say of

a state which instead of possessing a code of laws for the direction of its subjects, left them entirely at the mercy of a ruler's whim? Yet, wherein does such a despotic system differ from the domestic tyranny which fixes no boundary between right and wrong except such as the caprice of the parent may build up at the moment. The moral code is, in most points, the same in all well regulated families, but the systems of family governance must necessarily differ. Every head of a household, like a patriarch of the olden time, is a ruler over his people; but all the general systems of conduct that ever were propounded, all the Guides to Domestic Happiness that ever emanated from the fertile train of theorists, will fail in enabling a man to fulfil the duties of so responsible a station, if his mind be not illumined by truth, and his heart filled with religious reverence. There must be one general system of governance, and there must be an individual one modified by the exigencies of special circumstances; but both must harmonize. Children must be taught the principles of the laws by which they are directed, and they should be fully informed of the meaning of every variation from fixed rules. They should not be constrained by the old despotic method, "*sic volo, sic jubeo*." Such a species of tyranny awakens in a spirited child a sense of injustice, while in a timid one it tends to crush all latent energy of character. During the two or three first years of infancy, the "*sic volo*" should be made to exert its proper influence in subjecting the will of a creature too young to be made acquainted with moral restraints; but, when the time arrives, (and it comes far sooner than we are willing to believe,) when the mind is awakening to a perception of truth, and the child asks, "Why must I do so?" no judicious parent will be content with answering, "*sic jubeo*."

Let the expanding reason be enlightened, let the intellect be satisfied, let the young questioner feel that he is not expected to offer the slavish obedience of the ox or the ass, and, be assured, that, if you have fulfilled your duty in the days of infancy, he will not hesitate in his obedience. A little while, and the remembrance that his questions on such points ever result in renewed assurance of his parent's superior judgment, will silence all doubt, and produce in his mind the habit of silent, unquestioning submission. Surely the willing obedience of an enlightened and trusting spirit, is far better than the reluctant deference of an impatient bondsman. Nothing can be more absurd in theory and more vile in practice than the attempt, in common parlance, to "break the temper," and to "crush the will." The force which would subdue a determined will, only increases its obstinate power of resistance; while if the power be exerted against a wayward rather than a strong will, the effect must necessarily be to produce weakness, irresolution, want of moral dignity, and almost of moral responsibility. No, let the temper be subdued, softened, modified, by every gentle and decided means, let the will be directed by the precepts of the Book of

all Truth, let the mind be illumined with knowledge, and the heart purified by virtue, and then safely may we trust the hottest head and the most wayward temper. Many a noble and spirited boy has been driven to desperation and destruction by the exercise of despotic power, suddenly assumed as a counterpoise to the evil results of the past unlimited injustice. Many a timid and sensitive child has been bowed down beneath the weight of a tyranny which he could not comprehend, and in learning to submit to thralldom, has learned to play the liar to his own soul.

Children are entitled to more respect than is generally accorded them. There is in every young mind, unless perverted by indulgence, or indurated by unkindness, a certain quality, which cannot be better designated than by the term *self-respect*. Next to the restraints of religion and conscience, there is nothing which can erect so strong a barrier against the encroachments of vice, as this same quality. Yet in nine cases out of ten we confound self-respect with self-conceit, and attribute to the dictates of foolish vanity or perverse pride, those emotions of acute shame which are occasioned by the public rebuke, or the personal degradation. A keen sense of shame is usually accompanied with great sensitiveness of conscience, and when, in the plenitude of our power, we pursue any system which tends to blunt the one, we may be sure that we shall dull the perceptions of the other. Any kind of discipline which degrades a child in his own eyes, or that of his companions, is injurious to the character, and of all debasing, demoralizing influences, the worst is bodily fear. One of the most frightful pictures ever presented to the writer's mind, was that afforded by the convicts of Auburn prison as they were marched out from their workshops to their dining hall, with locked step, folded arms, and faces turned towards their keepers. There were six hundred men, strong in body, active in mind, powerful in will—men who had faced crime in almost every shape, men who had learned to make daring and criminal deeds the very measure of their lives, yet were they subjected to the most implicit obedience, reduced to the most abject submission, crushed beneath the paralyzing weight of positive bodily fear. They dreaded the lash like base hounds; and amid the deep traces of sin and suffering written on their blasted brows, could be read the debasing influence of that system which sears the mind through the scars of the quivering body. It may be that there are characters which require the exercise of brute force to restrain their evil propensities; but let us, at least, hope that they are but few. The child who has been early taught the power of moral influences, whose perceptions have been fully awakened to the dignity of human nature, by being made acquainted with its direct responsibility to God, its Creator and Preserver, who has been guided, restrained, directed, but never degraded by the discipline which his youth required, will be found to be one of the noblest of the human race.

And is there not yet another species of respect to

which children are entitled? "*Let nothing impure enter here, for this is the abode of infancy,*" might be inscribed in letters of gold on the portal of every nursery. How often does the idle song, the ribald jest, or the loose conversation, uttered by those who believe themselves safe in a child's youth and ignorance, contaminate for ever the snowy purity of the infant mind! How often does the want of that sensitive delicacy which is, as it were, the *blush of the soul*, that instinctive dread of every thing like the shadow of evil, how often does the lack of this quality in the guardians of childhood, lay the foundation of shamelessness in after life! How much of the recklessness of vice, and its distrust of virtue may be traced to the indiscriminate associations of the nursery and the boarding school.

In the course of a discussion which I once heard respecting the moral tendency of Bulwer's writings, a lady of the company gave the following testimony: "I was one day reading aloud for a friend," said she, "one of Bulwer's most fascinating novels, and while thus engaged, my daughter, a child of some ten years of age, entered, and seated herself beside me. I was in the midst of one of his most impassioned scenes, the language was full of eloquence and beauty, yet my cheek burned as I pursued the theme. My eye glanced timidly down the page in advance of my voice, as if I feared to give utterance to all that might come, and, at length, with some plausible excuse, in order to avoid exciting curiosity by my sudden change of purpose, I closed the book. I well knew that the spotless mind of my child could not be sullied by the burning words which she could not comprehend, but the presence of purity was a reproach to passion, and I dared not insult the dignity of unconscious innocence."

What a commentary upon the book! What an example to those who know naught of the respect due to childhood!

But the right which most closely appertains to these little people, and one which most materially affects their after life, is one, which, strange to say, is often least regarded. It is the right of enjoying a happy childhood. You look surprised, gentle reader. Did you labour under the mistake of supposing all children happy? You were never more deceived. Gay and thoughtless and merry they may be, for there is a sense of animal enjoyment in their young life which ever utters its voice in mirthfulness, but how few can you find in whom is a fountain of pure, deep joy ever bubbling up from the heart to the lips! How few are there who are habitually cheerful without the excitements of amusement and companionship. We take great pains to procure pleasures for our children, but rarely do we study the art of making them happy. Regard, for instance, the children of those fond and indulgent parents who seem to forget that there are any other claims upon them than those of parental love. Look into the nursery strewn with fragments of costly toys, remnants of the whim of yesterday; observe the varied appliances which nurture them into feebleness, the delicate food which pampers diseased appetite, the

rich attire which awakens selfish vanity, and the unlimited devotion to their caprices which governs the whole household. Every day brings a new pleasure, something is constantly in prospect for their gratification, and the time, the wealth and the talents of those fond parents are lavished to confer happiness upon their idols. But how do they succeed? Let the fragile health, the dissatisfied temper, the peevish indifference, the revolting selfishness of the indulged and sated creatures answer. Their happiness has been sought through the medium of the senses alone. They have been gratified in every appetite, but the moral sources of enjoyment have never been opened to them. Selfish desires have been forced into premature development, and the result is satiety and discontent. The childish voluptuary must suffer the same penalty which awaits sensual indulgence in later life; but, woe unto those who hang so fearful a weight upon the wings of a pure and sinless spirit!

Let us reverse the picture, and look into the domestic circle of one of those mistaken men who finds sin in every thing beautiful or joyful in the world, and "seeks to merit Heaven by making earth a Hell." Carefully, conscientiously, aye, with deep agony of spirit, has he unfolded to his children the sinfulness of their hearts, the utter depravity of their natures, and the certainty of their eternal condemnation. The God whom his children ought to address as their Father in Heaven, wears to them the semblance of a stern and vindictive Judge. This beautiful world they are taught to regard but as a field of snares and pitfalls, while the resources of intellectual life are to them but so many temptations of the Evil One. Self-denial, not the voluntary surrender of selfish wishes to the impulses of a noble and generous soul, but the self-denial of a mean calculation, which by a sacrifice now hopes to secure a reward in future; a truckling, bargaining disposition, which would fain buy God to favour by bodily penance, together with the carefulness of the steward who hid in a napkin the talent which should have been used to his Master's honour, are enjoined upon them by every threat and promise. They are taught that just in proportion to their obstinate rejection of all pleasures now, will be their fruition of heavenly joys, and the fearful words of Scripture, which might well appal the stoutest heart, "*He that offendeth in one point is guilty of all,*" is written as in letters of blood upon the doorposts of their houses.

Oh! if there be a deep and damning sin, next in blackness only to the guilt of deliberately seducing youth into vice, it is that of turning into such a bitter draught of gall and wormwood the pure upspringings of early devotion. There is an instinctive impulsive sense of religion in every young, pure heart, an innate reverence for the good, an intuitive perception of the beauty of holiness; and woe unto those who check the spontaneous effusions of gratitude by depicting to the mental view a God of judgment rather than of mercy.

Happiness is ever allied with goodness, and the

happiest child is that one who has been fully disciplined in every duty. Obedience, deference, a subjection of the will to the gentle governance of affection, are all requisite to a sense of happiness in childhood. Let a child be taught the religion of love, and not of fear, let every day afford him a new lesson of forbearance toward others, and control over himself, let every selfish impulse be repressed by noble motives of action, let his mind be enlightened by knowledge best adapted to his faculties, and then let him be surrounded by every thing that can make life bright and beautiful. Send him out into the woods and fields to study the works of God, and to acquire health of body, and vigour of mind, beneath the blessed influences of the free air and the glad sunshine. Let him enjoy to the very utmost all the simple pleasures which nature affords to the unpoluted heart, and thus, amid all things joyous, will he acquire the elasticity of mind and cheerfulness of temper which are such effectual aids in life to after sorrows.

Salutary indeed in later years are the influences of a happy childhood. Sorrow may cloud each coming day, and fear may haunt the distant future, guilt may have stained the hand, and vice may have

blackened the heart, but, from the depths of degradation and sorrow and crime will men look back to the scenes of their earliest youth with a yearning tenderness. And if those scenes are clad in the sunshine of happiness, if they can behold there ever the good, the beautiful and the true, who can tell with what saving power such remembrances may come to the world-wearied and sin-stained soul? It is not for us to guard from life's manifold ills the precious beings entrusted to our care, but we can at least impart the blessing of happiness in those years when impressions are most easily fixed in unchangeable truthfulness. We can make them happy in childhood, happy not in pampered indulgence, not in unrestrained license, not in ascetic penance, but in the daily exercise of duties, in the consciousness of moral dignity, in the enjoyment of all pure pleasures. Let us look upon them as rational and responsible beings, never forgetting that their immature reason requires the guidance of experience and truth, and that their responsibility as moral agents imposes a double duty upon those whose privilege it is to lead their faltering steps from the threshold of life to the portal of Eternity.

## THE SENTIMENT OF PETSHIP.

BY MRS. E. OAKES SMITH, AUTHOR OF "SINLESS CHILD," ETC.

I HAD taken up my pen to write a story. I had created my heroine, endowed her with grace, and soul and sentiment; created a world adapted to the discipline of such a being; created a true and noble and manly heart, to understand its affinities; and then I had erected circumstance, trial, inward joys, and external sufferings, all of which should develop the mystery of life, and its strange, sorrowful, and yet joyful affections. And thus the story rests in my own mind.

Not a word had been penned, but the creations were entire. The door opened, and little Eddy came slowly in, breathing heavily, and in tears. "The dear little squirrel is dead."

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It was even so. I laid aside the pen, and we wept together. Yes, I am even now showering tears upon my paper.

For a squirrel?

It may be. The child certainly weeps for the squirrel only. It may be I weep from suggestiveness, in part. I am fond of pets. I cannot live without them. My friends are always gratifying my taste in this way; and innumerable have been the doves, the birds of all kinds, the flowers, the kittens, dogs, rabbits, guinea-pigs, &c., &c., which have ministered to my harmless idiosyncrasy. All have died. Nothing remains but the flowers and a canary. I breathe freely again. I have received each and all with a painful, regretful pleasure. I knew they would perish, and trembled to have my tenderness awakened.

This may be childish. Let it be so. It is but the outer vestibule of the heart, and it may be best to linger there, amid the small rills that struggle to the light, keeping the deep fountain of feeling sealed up in its holiness.

There is a sentiment in pets. I once had a terrapin, which others called ugly and stupid. I knew to the contrary. He had a choice in the garden. I could see this, and it inspired something akin to respect. He was not a creature of accident. His yellow spots began to wear the appearance of beauty. I struggled against this. I would guard myself from the hazard of having that which is at variance with the principles of beauty, assume its aspect only from the power of contact. So I learned to regard this approximation in my own mind only as a prompting to the love of the true and the beautiful.

And then the terrapin became a pain to me. He had suggested a standard which made his own defects but the more glaring. Yet he seemed to be grateful, I thought. He distinguished my voice,

and would turn his long neck in the direction, and take bits of apple from my fingers. He would notice no one else in this wise. It grew sad to me, this attachment of a creature so low and imperfect. It grew painful. I began to pity him, as something with a struggling gleam of a higher nature. I could not endure this painful pity, and when a long heavy rain came, and the earth was loosened about the walls, and the terrapin disappeared, it was a relief to me, as though the creature might be happier out of my influence.

Flowers are always beautiful gifts. We never lose sight of their fragility, and so the gratification they afford, though momentary, is perfect. We never look for a response to our sentiment, and are therefore never disappointed by its absence nor incompleteness.

Canaries are somewhat like flowers in this respect. They awake more of sentiment, but they will not bear a caress, and seem too much like those brilliant hopes for ever beguiling the fancy, but eluding the grasp. I am not certain but they excite at times something like irritation, so pertinaciously do they crack their seeds, so inconsiderately splash the water even into your face, which you in your kindness brought with your own hands in the vain hope of eliciting something like a response to your tenderness. Then, when all is over, he pours forth a flood of wild foreign melody, to please himself, not you, and you turn away disappointed and vexed, that a creature that inspires so much sympathy in your breast, should be so utterly regardless, so bright, so melodious, and yet so cold.

I have never learned to love a cat. Their stealthy, mousing qualities are so repugnant to my own nature, that they give me a sense of discomfort. I know not why it is, yet I have never been able to keep one. I feed them with the greatest care, provide for their comfort, and yet they will not stay with me. I have thought the prejudice might be mutual. The only sentiment I ever discovered in a cat, (I believe I am wrong to call it a sentiment,) was that of jealousy. I had a pretty spaniel about the age of the cat, and they had been so trained as to live together in great quietude. Yet the dog felt he was the better liked, and with the confidence of a frank, honest and confiding nature, sat nearer my feet than puss would venture to do.

She learned this, and no sooner did I leave the sofa or rocking-chair, than she would spring into the seat, and look down upon Fidelle, with what to me seemed a sort of sardonic, feline complacency. It might have been prejudice on my part, but somehow Fidelle, with his honest, straightforward

attachment, disdaining all petty artifice and mean adulation, grew tenfold more engaging. If I caressed Fidelle, puss would be sure to insinuate her nose; and out of pure benevolence of heart, I gave a pat or two, but not heartily, and she must have felt it, for she left me. It wasn't in the nature of things that I should love her—our natures were so unlike.

Guinea pigs are wholly animal. Ye cannot in any way infuse into them the shadow of a sentiment. They have what children call a "cunning look," but their rotund sleekness becomes after a while revolting to you.

I have once or twice had mice become entirely tame, in my room, playing about my writing table, eating crumbs in my lap, scrambling up the geraniums, and dividing cake and seeds with the canary; for I removed one of the glasses from the cage to give one entrance, and these two dissimilar beings established a sort of friendship for each other.

At first, I presume, a mouse must have taken me for a fixture, as I sat indulging dream-fancies, and thus have approached me with as little ceremony as he did the beautiful Apollo in the corner, adown whose exquisite nose I have seen him run, without a shadow of remorse. Slowly he seemed to imbibe the truth that a kindly pulse was beating near him. I am certain I knew the point of time on which this conviction assumed definitiveness in the mouse-brain. From that time a something like solemnity mingled with the mouse nature, something ennobled grew upon him. He was all mouse, alert, dainty, arch and frolicsome, with the infusion of something bordering on the spiritual.

I loved this spontaneous trustfulness, this instinctive yielding up of affection, this pretty mouse credulity, never staying to question as to the being whose cord of sympathy he had touched. Yet was I not devoid of selfishness. I imagined a thousand perils would beset my favourite. I saw enemies on every side. There was a plot to ensnare him if but a curtain ruffled in the faint air.

Yes, I confess it. With shame of heart do I confess it. But for the entreaties of a nobler minded friend, I *should have secured and caged* the sweet, trusting, grateful creature, whose life was designed to be one of freedom, and joy, and unconstrained action. True, he nibbled my papers; true, one night a cosey nest was made from the abstracted threads of my carpet; true, the books became Chinese walls and Babel observatories to his aspiring and exploring mind; yet what were these trifling annoyances to the tenderness he awakened, and the many sentiments of which he became suggestive.

A mouse-coloured rabbit, with white paws and ears, was for a long time mine. Yet I never dared to love it. These creatures are so timid, so fragile, that I avoid letting my sympathies go out. I used to watch his wild sports with real pleasure, and yet with an inward hope that some genial child would mistake him for a "Perdita," and take him away. This I believe was the case, and I was relieved from the sorrow of seeing him die.

Then came the squirrel, fresh, beautiful, full of

life. I received it with a painful misgiving. These coquettes of the woods had been favourites of mine in childhood. I had often seated myself beneath a tree to watch their antics. Their saucy scrutiny, their half chattering, as if they talked whimsically to a neighbour over the shoulder; the impudence with which they fixed themselves upon a bough, and cracked their nuts, dropping the shells purposely, it would seem, upon my head, amused me. They seemed like little droll men and women, who had taken to themselves pretty and fanciful forms, and thus were masquerading the woods. I loved their easy mischief, and off-hand sauciness, that looked always as if they knew better, but were bent upon acting out their caprices.

Their qualities were feminine. Genial, playful, and always with a conscious prettiness. Judge then how I was impressed by this beautiful creature, linking the past so to the present. I practised the greatest caution about it. One friend assured me she had kept one *four years*, and then it perished by an accident.

Four years. I might that length of time indulge my harmless propensity. Four years I *might* have this sweet, graceful creature to love. The prospect was tempting. But then the lady who kept one so long, though gentle and sweet, had not my fondness for pets. There was the difference. Hers might live, when mine might be lent me only as a portion of life's severe discipline of the affections. But then in four years one might prepare one's self for the loss of a pet.

Another friend had kept a squirrel nearly as long; but then he took the precaution to give it away in anticipation of the fatal period, for he had before expended so much tenderness upon a dog, that he was fearful of a second attachment of the kind; and I believe the squirrel became to him too much the suggestor of the perished love.

Well, the squirrel was received slowly into the affections. Admitted only occasionally into my room, for I had made up my mind to be very cold and indifferent. He was uncommonly handsome. I would make him a ministry to a quiet vanity. I would show off my handsome pet. When a sentimental visitor came, the impudent little thing should be trotted out; and his cool sauciness became quite irresistible. "*Heu Lachrymosus.*"

He took great delight in scratching at the corners of books, as if he were making great ado about knowledge. He nearly gnawed the binding from Webber, so eager was he for mathematics. He treated the frippery of the annuals with great contempt, never giving them so much as a nibble, while old, substantial, time-honoured folios seemed to give him almost an ecstasy, especially a half bound Shakspeare.

There is a stuffed whippoorwill in my room, which he would pass with an easy off-hand acquaintance air, till one day finding it within his reach, he seemed disposed to a nearer companionship. Suddenly he drew back, and I am firmly of opinion that strange and fearful suspicions came into

his innocent brain. I think his air changed. I heard a book fall soon after, and turning to pick it up he had, whether purposely or not, flung down the "Vigil of Faith," and there was the following passage right before my eyes, as if to reproach me for the cruelty of his captivity, and other vague cruelties to the motionless whippoorwill.

"Birds are in woodland bowers,  
Voices in lonely dells,  
Streams to the listening hours,  
Talk in earth's secret cells."

I was touched. There seemed a pathos in the appeal, as if in denying freedom I should not deny tenderness. If I kept him from the delights of the greenwood, I should compensate for the loss. I took the creature at once to my sympathies. He sat upon my lap, and eat his nuts. He arranged his dainty plume like that in the bonnet of a cavalier, and then seemed to ask if I didn't think it quite captivating.

He perched himself upon the corner of my table, and looked on while I wrote, with such a grotesque funniness as made me laugh at what I was about. I am sure he had a perception of the ridiculous, or he never could have got that particular look.

Alas! my room is full of recollections of him.

And now I am done with pets. "Othello's occupation's gone." I will waste no more tenderness in this wise, but rather keep it "locked up like a precious jewel" in the heart. I will steel myself against "birds of the air and beasts of the field," and "all manner of creeping thing." They shall never again appeal to any sympathy, nor awaken the shadow of a sentiment. "'Tis mockery all."

I had thought of a hound, a beautiful, slender hound, with silken ears and half human eyes, and superhuman fidelity, as a desirable pet; but now, "procul, oh! procul."

I once heard that a friend, who had enjoyed a favourite of this kind for twelve years, would never afterwards venture upon a like attachment. This amazed me. I did not well comprehend it; now, the whole mystery is open to me, hidden before only because I had not reached the highest point in the sentiment of petship.

That dog, like my squirrel, had realized the ideal of a pet. No more sentiment could be awakened upon the subject, and to attempt the thing again were a profanation, a disloyalty.



## THE TALISMAN,

WHEREWITH HAPPINESS IS SECURED.

BY MISS MARGARET COXE.

FEW individuals commanded more respect from rich or poor in the town of C—, than did the venerable Mr. Brinton. He had formerly lived in one of our eastern cities in great affluence; and had been blessed with two promising children, but by the misconduct of a gentleman, with whom he had been connected in business, he was deprived of the former blessing, and by an epidemic disease, of the latter.

These two severe afflictions, however, by the blessing of Him who is able to overrule all events to His glory, were ultimately of great benefit to him. Many may feel no surprise, at hearing that his religious condition was wonderfully changed for the better by God's blessing on these trials, since such an improvement of severe sorrows is by no means uncommon, while they may be incredulous, when told, that Mr. Brinton's true happiness was likewise greatly promoted by the fiery discipline to which he was subjected; and yet it was a truth which the old gentleman himself was always ready to admit, and one on which he could often eloquently expatiate. He had had by nature, a very ambitious spirit, which had strengthened as he became increasingly prosperous. He then looked round not infrequently, upon his elegant mansion and beautiful grounds, on his splendid furniture and showy equipages, with feelings of great self-complacency, closely resembling those, which swelled the bosom of Nebuchadnezzar, when from the summit of his palace, he surveyed his magnificent capital: "My power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth," was the exclamation, which burst from the lips of the Babylonish monarch, and which was so speedily followed by severe retributive judgments from Him, to whose great Name he had refused to render the honour which was justly due to it. Similar thoughts, although they were not vented in words, frequently passed through the mind of Brinton, and He, whose prerogative it is to search the heart, marked them well, and permitted His judgments to be executed on the sinner, while at the same time, His mercy was preparing an abundant recompense for them. The old gentleman was suddenly deprived of the worldly possessions, with the love of which his heart had been so filled, that space could not be found for higher and holier emotions.

By the pressure of his afflictions, he was at first crushed to the earth, but in this season of humiliation and bereavement, the Holy Spirit,—the Divine Comforter, was sent to revive his drooping soul,

and renew it, in the image of God, and under this transforming influence, the once selfish and ambitious Mr. Brinton became a benevolent and meek christian.

In the days of prosperity, he had given little thought to the promotion of the comfort of any, who were beyond his little loved circle of relatives; now, in his every action, he seems seeking to heighten the happiness of all with whom he is brought in contact, or over whom he can by any exertions obtain an influence; more especially is he assiduous in his efforts to promote the well-being of the juvenile part of the community.

He and his wife emigrated to the west many years since, and with the small remnant of his fortune secured to him, he purchased a comfortable rural residence in the vicinity of the town of C—. The swelling tide of population which poured into our place enlarged its borders, and the advance of improvements towards his property, raised it rapidly in value, and before many years had elapsed, he was again rich and increased in goods.

No child, indeed, lived to inherit his possessions, but like a holy man of old, Mr. Brinton and his excellent wife appeared determined to transport a large portion of their treasures before them, to that fairer and enduring home, which had been secured to them in heaven.

In common with some of my young companions, I had more than once been guilty of ridiculing the capacious pockets of the old gentleman. Many a conjecture had we formed, in order to account for the *outré* appearance which this gave to a part of his attire; but never had we satisfied ourselves entirely on this point, when one afternoon I felt myself rebuked for my thoughtless strictures on one so excellent, as I chanced to follow him on one of his rambles of benevolence.

On this occasion, the pockets so obnoxious to our taste were filled to their utmost capabilities, while the owner of them walked on wholly unconscious of the smiles which he was provoking. After we had advanced beyond the outskirts of the town, being ignorant of my vicinity to him, he began occasionally to whistle; now and then he would sing, in a full, clear voice, some poetic stanza of a devotional cast, or a portion of some favourite hymn; and the tones of his voice, and the alacrity with which he moved, indicated great cheerfulness of spirits.

A fine manly boy of about twelve years of age

crossed his path, and in doing so received a cordial shake by the hand, and was accosted with friendly inquiries as to the cause of his absence from Sunday school on the preceding Lord's day.

"Mother was very sick, sir," was the reply, made in a respectful manner, "and I staid at home to nurse the baby for her."

"Very right! very right! my boy; the Lord will have mercy and not sacrifice. But be careful to be at school next Sunday, if your good mother is well enough. Stop! here are two fine apples, one for yourself, and the other for your mother."

Again he shook the hand of the boy, and with a bow and grateful words from the latter, they parted. Soon after he overtook another child, smaller than the former, and he was in tears. The old gentleman patted him on the head.

"Ay, Robert, is that you?" said he, "why these tears?"

"Why, sir, Jack Thompson just snatched away a nice apple I was carrying to my poor little sick sister, and mother has not another penny."

"Cheer up, my boy! I have got a pill in my pocket, that will cure your trouble, and perhaps help her too."

"Thank you, sir," said the child, sorrowfully, "but we have got plenty of pills, and poor Susy thought a roast apple would taste so good to her."

"Hold out your hat, my boy, and take my pills; I am sure they will be welcome," continued Mr. Brinton.

The child wiped away his tears, and held out his hat, as if perplexed to know why pills were to be portioned out to him by such a large measure. Oh! how bright his little face looked, when one rosy apple after another was dropped into it. Not waiting to receive thanks, and only saying, "Robert, remember some are for yourself," the old gentleman passed on.

Deeply did I now feel rebuked for my idle merriment on the pockets of Mr. Brinton, since I felt convinced that they had been made thus large, that they might serve as storehouses, from which the benevolent wearer might draw forth treasures, with which to cheer and relieve others.

I was not sorry to find him soon after turn into a pleasant lane, which led to a favourite woodland glen, towards which I had been designedly directing my steps for the purpose of botanizing.

I had hoped, as I followed his steps, to receive some other useful lesson, and was not disappointed. We came to a beautiful stream, which meanders pleasantly around the outskirts of our town. Mr. Brinton was a little in advance of me; for I had purposely loitered on my way, and I heard him soon accost a youth of our acquaintance, whom I had observed reclining on the banks of the rivulet, under the shade of a thicket of fine old trees. The latter had a book open on his knee, and as I stopped ostensibly to botanize, being screened from observation by the intervening foliage, I overheard the following dialogue:

"Ah, Arthur! are you here!" exclaimed the old

gentleman, in his usually pleasant and cheerful tone of voice.

"Yes, sir," replied the youth. "I have been amusing myself for an hour, in examining some of the fresh-water shells, with which this stream abounds. I have got some fine specimens, though I had, to be sure, to dig pretty deep for them."

Mr. Brinton was a scientific man, and he seated himself by the side of his young companion, and began the work of examination; and after ascertaining the genera and species of each, to Arthur's great delight, he wrote them down for him on slips of paper. The boy's countenance glistened with delight, as his friend proceeded to impart more and more of the information on conchological subjects, with which his fine mind was liberally supplied.

"I like," said he, with a benevolent smile, "to see young people choosing their recreations among the works of God, instead of finding them in reading exciting works of fiction, or in scenes of extravagance and idle mirth. But, my dear boy, we must take heed not to set our hearts too much even on things innocent in themselves, for even these very shells, interesting as they are and ought to be, may yet become objects of idolatrous regard, and the means of rousing some of the worst passions of our nature."

Arthur looked incredulous. "Yes indeed, my dear boy," continued the old gentleman, "I have known a conchologist to exhibit the most disgusting evidences of envy and covetousness, while surveying the stores collected by another, while he was notorious for the miserly spirit with which he held fast his own treasures, being reluctant to part with any specimens of a rarer kind, even when he possessed duplicates."

"Oh!" exclaimed Arthur, "I have been in the habit of thinking, that these studies had something ennobling, and almost purifying in them. I have, at any rate, never been aware of their exciting in my bosom any emotions but such as were of a most pleasurable and innocent kind!"

Mr. Brinton regarded him steadfastly for a few moments, and very probably thought he detected, as I did, a considerable degree of self-complacency in the expression of his fine, manly countenance, for he immediately directed Arthur's attention to the extreme purity of the water which lay at his feet, and which in many places was then so limpid as to permit the gravelly covering of its bed to be distinctly seen. He then threw a large stone in one of these spots, and as he did so exclaimed, "Observe, Arthur, though the rock ruffles the waters as it passes through them, they still remain as transparent as before!" The youth assented to his remark. The old gentleman a second time hurled a stone, and that a smaller one than the first, in another direction, where no gravelly bottom was perceptible. The elements were troubled, as before; but now, around the spot where the stone had fallen, the stream looked muddy and unlike itself.

Arthur's attention was again drawn to the rivulet by this circumstance being noticed. He how-

ever merely said, in a careless tone, "I perceive the difference very sensibly, sir, but the fact is easily accounted for. In the one instance, there was gravel for the stone to fall on; in the other, it encountered a muddy foe!"

"Yes! my dear boy," said Mr. Brinton, "it is easy to account for the difference. My object in calling your attention to the fact was, however, to persuade you to draw a moral from it. Those waters, a few moments since, appeared in every direction calm, clear and beautiful, but no sooner were they disturbed by the passage of the stones through them, in different places, than a striking contrast was observable between their several parts. In the one instance, where the intruding stone fell on a pebble-lined bed, only a short-lived agitation of the stream was perceptible, which impaired not its pure beauty, in the slightest degree; in the other, where an earthy bottom was disturbed, mire and dirt were stirred up, and the waters were greatly polluted by their presence. So it is, my dear boy, with the hearts of men. To the eye of a careless observer, the exterior of the man of the world may appear frequently as fair as that of the christian, but let the stones of temptation only assail them both, and then is he forced to admit the difference existing between them.

"The heart of one having been renewed by the Spirit of God, the bed of the stream, through which the passions flow, has become coated, as it were, with fragments taken from the Rock of Ages, so that when trials are permitted to assail him, while they may agitate the waters, they will not succeed in rendering them polluted and guilty; while temptations falling on the soil of the unrenewed heart, will at once stir up the offensive matter that has been lying there undisturbed. Amidst the commo-

tion which follows, pollution appears, sufficient to cloud all that was previously beautiful. Trust not, then, my dear boy, to external appearances only, nor allow yourself to think that the calm diffused over the soul, by any study or other application of the kind, will be more than superficial. Your favourite pursuit, ennobling as it may be to the mind, is yet powerless to produce any change in the heart. I once beheld, at the same moment, two gentlemen gazing with apparently equal interest, on a fine collection of conchological specimens, and yet one of them was a devoted servant of God, who, amidst his labours in the cause of his divine Master, found time to attend to the claims of science; while the other, equally interested as he was in the same cause of literature, was morally dead, and finally became a victim to intemperance, and the source of deep misery to a lovely wife and family of children." Here the old gentleman paused, and as a slight shivering passed over his frame, he said, with a serious, but still with a most happy expression of countenance, "I, too, Arthur, may find lessons of a wholesome kind, from this pretty stream. The dampness arising from it, has, in truth, given me cold. So you see, my dear boy, both for old and young, the admonition of the Saviour is alike needed, 'What I say unto you, I say unto all, *Watch!*'"

As they left their retreat, I quitted mine also, and thenceforth, I courted the society of him, whom in former days I had ridiculed. But wherever I found him, and under whatever circumstances he might be placed, I felt constrained to acknowledge, that he was emphatically a *happy man*; happy in himself, and the medium for diffusing enjoyment to all around him; for he lived *not unto himself*, but unto his Master, and His people.

## THE NIGHT-BLOOMING CEREUS.

BY MRS. A. M. F. ANNAN.

"WHAT happiness! what a fortune! what a lucky *procès*!—the notaries, the advocates, all paid, and a thousand crowns left!—my dear Eugene," continued Madame Desandré, moving her little treasure to the side of the table at which her son had seated himself, and affectionately throwing her arm over his shoulder, "how I have longed for such an occasion to prove my estimation of your dutiful, your noble course of conduct towards a widowed and helpless mother! Accept it as her offering of gratitude;—it is yours, every *sous*, my beloved son!"

Firm and stout of heart as he was, a tear stood in the eye of the fine young man she addressed, at this mark of his mother's appreciation. The next moment, however, he replied in his wonted clear and cheerful tones, while he stooped to kiss her hand, "No, no, my dear mother! I, too, have waited anxiously for this acquisition with the hope of its bettering my prospects, but not that it should be in the way your kindness would propose. How long would the thousand crowns last you, for yourself alone? You could live on three hundred a-year, could you not?"

"My dear boy, I have never had so much since we two were left destitute upon the world. Many a year I would have been glad of the half of it for us both. But why do you ask? Nothing is mine alone while you are spared to me."

"Your using it solely might be the means of making a rich man of me, mother."

Madame Desandré looked curiously in his face, as if to divine his meaning, and Eugene, with a manner much less assured than he designed it to be, proceeded; "Now that you are so well provided for, could you not spare me for a while to push my own fortunes?"

"What would you do, my son?" asked Madame Desandré, turning quite pale with apprehension.

"You must be aware, dear mother," returned Eugene, "that in Paris there is but a hopeless future to a young man like me. You have always strongly opposed my adopting the life of a soldier, the most suitable one, perhaps, to the impoverished descendant of a good family, and to a soldier's son, and you have been equally averse to my hiring my services to a merchant or banker. In both you were right, and, to confess the truth, my own inclinations led to neither course, for the one choice would have separated me from you almost constantly, perhaps entirely, and the other would have bound me to a routine of tiresome drudgery, and a subordinate station, probably all my days, so there has been nothing left me but to struggle along as I might, and but a poor pittance could I gain with all

my exertions! A napoleon now and then, for English or Spanish lessons, a few crowns for instructions in drawing or penmanship, a few francs for a paragraph for some journal, or for a vignette or caricature for some print-shop; this has been the amount of our dependence."

"Yet we have been quite happy on it, Eugene;" said the anxious mother.

"So we have *seemed*, mother; I, because I was thankful to be able to supply you with even that little, and you, because you tried heroically to support your reverses of fortune, and, with your usual tenderness, to repay me by cheerfulness for my efforts. In submitting to our lot when it appeared unchangeable, we did well, but now an opportunity by which our condition may be improved has offered itself, and it would argue a want of manly energy in me to let it escape. You have now in your hands a means of comfortable subsistence, for some time, without your being obliged to trust patiently for your daily bread to my paltry and half-rewarded avocations, and whilst you are enjoying it, I might discover a way to secure you a competence equal, if not far greater, for your declining years."

"But you hinted, Eugene, that we must be separated, we who have been together every day since your birth."

"That is the evil, mother, which must accompany the good, and though it would be hard to bear, let us try to make the sacrifice. And it will not be for so very long a time; in two or three years we will be reunited, under, I hope, far happier circumstances. Do not look so grave, and I will lay my whole plan before you. An old sea-trader, for whom I have, for years past, done various commissions of copying and translating, is about preparing for a voyage of adventure round at least half the globe. He has proposed that I should accompany him, not only for an opportunity to see the world, but with a view to advancing my fortunes. He will give me my passage for assisting in his book-keeping, and a handsome premium besides, should his commerce prove successful. Here I can do nothing, but elsewhere I may cease to be a mere cipher. I know languages enough to be understood in any place in the range of civilization. I am a good accountant, a good penman, a good draftsman, and a tolerable civil engineer; I can paint, dance, fiddle and sing; I am, in short, not only an accomplished, but a practical young man, so why should I fail? I can surely fill my purse somewhere, even should it be by inventing new puppet-shows in Hindostan, by introducing a new 'Academy of Compliments'

to China, or by flourishing as a dancing-master in America."

"My dear son!"

"Do not fear, mother. I shall do nothing to disgrace myself or you. Should I fail to succeed, I will return, and we can live on as we have done heretofore, with the satisfaction of reflecting that we have made an effort to do better. In the mean time I know that you will resign yourself to my absence, trusting that it will be for my ultimate benefit. Don't get any older, dear mother; you are still young, if rosy cheeks, white teeth and raven hair are signs of youth; and after three years you may become dictatress of *ton* in some realm of which you have never heard. You will have to give me a hundred of those crowns, however; it will suffice to equip me for a beginning, and there may be a little left for a trial of luck. Sometimes but a small venture is required for a great result. You remember my first English story, which I was so proud to construe to you when a boy, 'Whittington and his Cat?' Who knows but that I may yet rival the renowned Whittington?"

It is unnecessary to repeat the remonstrances of Madame Desandr , in which there was no argument. The affectionate reasonings of her son prevailed, and preparations for his voyage were commenced.

A few days before the vessel was to leave the Seine, Madame Desandr  heard Eugene take something from a porter on the stairs, and when he entered the *salon* she discovered it to be a large cactus, newly set in a beautiful porcelain vase.

"I have brought you a parting present, mother," said he, placing it on the table beside her. "I wished to leave one which would keep me daily in your remembrance, and I could think of nothing better than a plant, which would be likely to live, and yet would require constant care. I selected this one, because it reminded me of yourself. It is the *cereus* which brings forth its beautiful blossoms in the night, just as you displayed your brightest virtues in the gloom of adversity."

"My dear boy, how you delight to flatter your mother; but I am glad you have made the choice. It will be company for me, like a living thing, when you are gone, and I could hardly do without something to watch and nurse. And what a charming vase!—it is the purest of Sevres ware, with such a lovely little picture."

"Yes, I could have had others more classical, with Dianas, Calyptos and Ariadnes, but I thought you would like the simple, natural sentiment of this best. It is inscribed 'The Only Son!'"

"You were right! I have little taste for fine classical themes, but I well understand the expression of that fond looking French mother and her child."

"How short a time it seems to be since I was just such a little curly-headed fellow as that," said Eugene.

"And, indeed, it is not unlike what you were in childhood. Your eyes were then rather blue than

hazel, and your hair was brown rather than black, and no one would have expected you to become so tall," and the mother cast her eyes admiringly over the handsome face and figure of her son, "but how much you will have changed before you return to me!"

"I shall perhaps have become swarthy and athletic and weather-beaten, but it troubles my vanity to think of it, so let us talk about my returning a magnifico or a nabob. I can already imagine you drest in diamonds and cashmere, and commanding state chambers, instead of hiding yourself in these three or four paltry hired rooms; so be of good cheer, mother."

## CHAPTER II.

Two years had passed, and Madame Desandr  was still alone, though, during the earlier period of separation, a letter from the young adventurer had occasionally arrived to support her patience. The first, dated from the Cape of Good Hope, he had written in the same buoyancy of spirit which had preceded his departure. To a description of his new life he added, "I warn you not to expect any remarkable turn in my favour, though I will be humble enough to acknowledge that I am not quite free from disappointment myself. Did I show you a magnificent Dresden *meerchaum* which I purchased at the same *dep t* with your flower-vase? Well, I put it in my sea-chest as an adventure, deciding that in some land of treasure it would bring me barrels of gold dust, like those of my hero Whittington, at the very least. After my arrival here, I produced it for the admiration of one of the richest Dutch boors of the colony, and how think you my expectations ended? In an offer of a box of buffalo horns, or some dozens of dried sheepskins. Any thing for a speculation, should have been my motto, but unluckily my old notions of taste interfered, and when the plump young *vraus* of the household brought forward a package of ostrich feathers, the thought struck me how graceful they would look waving over my mother's bonnet, and I accepted them instead."

From Batavia he wrote, "I think my dear mother may be satisfied that my prospects are on the mend. Though my music and dancing and other accomplishments have availed me nothing, the prevailing notions about such matters, being, in this quarter of the world, rather peculiar, yet I have turned my drawing to some account. I accepted the proposal of a Portuguese merchant, a few days ago, to paint the portrait of his tawny wife, and as neither was very fastidious, and my choicer colours were not needed, I found the commission profitable enough, receiving some handfuls of Spanish dollars, besides a bushel or two of nutmegs to add to my stock in trade of ostrich feathers. When I write again I shall be on my way to Brazil."

No other letter came, and, after waiting several

months, Madame Desandr  began to despair. Little of a reader, and having never been out of Paris, she had ideas of circumnavigation as vague as those of the world in general before the time of Captain Cook. Visions of shipwrecks, pirates and cannibals haunted her by night and day, and she had no amusement to dispel them. She had been long too poor to have friends, her tastes were domestic, and Eugene had constituted her whole world of pleasure. Even the walks she had been accustomed to take regularly for air and exercise, were neglected, because she had no longer his arm to lean upon, and she became listless, debilitated, and at length almost bedridden. There was but one object in which she seemed to take an interest, and that, for her son's sake, was his parting present, the c reus.

One day the poor invalid had left her bed to place her beloved plant in the warm sunshine of a little balcony, some distance from her apartments, when her pallid face and feeble step attracted the notice of a fellow lodger, a lovely girl of seventeen or eighteen, who was ascending the stairs from the street. "Allow me, madame," said the young stranger, with the ready impulse of a kind heart, "to carry your vase for you. It must be heavy, and you look much indisposed."

Her assistance was needed more than she had supposed. She had scarcely received the vase before Madame Desandr  grew still paler, and stretching out her hands convulsively, sunk insensible to the floor. The calls of the young lady, whose name was Jaqueline Tourville, brought the *portiere* up to the passage, and between them she was borne to her rooms, and laid on a sofa.

Mademoiselle Tourville hastily tore the painted wrapper from a fresh bottle of perfumed water, which, with other little parcels, she had been carrying, and bathed the face of the sufferer. "Has the poor lady no family, no companions?" she asked, "I have never seen any one but herself enter these rooms."

"She has a maid, but that not constantly, and the girl has now been out for several hours. She passes a lonely life, poor Madame Desandr ! Of her own family there is but a son, and he has been at sea for two years. An excellent son he was, and it is his absence that is shortening her days. She is the oldest lodger in the h tel, and as I have known her long, I sometimes step in to see if I can do her any little service. But here is Matilde returning, and madame has nearly revived. She will be very thankful to you, mademoiselle, when she knows of your kindness."

Jaqueline Tourville was a charming specimen of the naturally gifted and carefully educated French girl,—graceful, artless, modest and affectionate, and she was very beautiful withal. She was an only child, and, like Madame Desandr , her mother was a widow. They had not long occupied their present lodgings, and were busied in preparations for a voyage to America, to join a half brother of Madame Tourville, who was settled on a planta-

tion in Louisiana, and on whom they were dependent for maintenance. He had promised to send for them when his place, which had been bequeathed to him a few years before by a friend, should have been set in order for their reception, and they had lately received intimation that he was awaiting them.

One of the first things which recurred to the mind of Jaqueline the next morning as a duty, was to inquire after Madame Desandr . Accordingly she called in the ante-room, and learned from the attendant that a physician had been summoned, who seemed to regard the case as serious. For several days the kind-hearted girl repeated her visits, and at length was admitted into the chamber of the invalid, who was anxious to return her acknowledgments. Like all who perform good actions from proper motives, Jaqueline shunned to be praised for them, and, to change the subject, she remarked the freshness and beauty of the flourishing cactus, which stood, in its elegant vase, by the bedside, for Madame Desandr  had kept it hourly in her sight. Her admiration elicited its history, which was almost as sorrowfully heard as told, and the tears of the bereaved mother and the young stranger at once formed a bond of friendship between them.

A week or two went round, and Madame Tourville remarked to her daughter, "Your work proceeds slowly, I think, Jaqueline, since you have taken our neighbour under your charge."

"I always take my work with me, dear mamma."

"Yes, but you do very little at it. I should be the last to prohibit your discharging any offices of charity, and under ordinary circumstances should take pleasure in aiding you in this, but now it is really necessary that we should deny ourselves the gratification of devoting much time to them. The packet will sail next week, and we have yet much to prepare."

"Then, mamma, I must be content to have fewer ruffles on my nightcaps and *robes de chambre*," returned her daughter, smiling, "but, seriously, there is nothing, in leaving Paris, which will pain me so much as parting with this poor Madame Desandr ,—friendless, suffering, and so near death, for the physician thinks she can last but a few days; and then she seems to consider my visits such a comfort! Imagine yourself in her place, mamma." Jaqueline was a scrupulous observer of the golden rule, and she fancied that her argument would at once silence her mother's objections.

"I commend your humanity, my love," said Madame Tourville, who was a woman of excellent principles, though the every-day friction of the world had robbed her of much ardour of feeling, and, after a pause, she continued, "I should be extremely sorry if we could not be ready for the next vessel, since we have unavoidably missed the one in which your uncle said he would expect us. You know the peculiarities of his temper, and we

are under too many obligations to him to risk trying his patience by appearing indifferent to his convenience. He may even now be at that northern port, to meet us, and we must exert ourselves to the utmost to keep the appointed time as nearly as possible. Then it requires much preparation to be properly supplied for a long sea voyage, and I am, besides, very anxious that your wardrobe should be as complete as our limited means will allow for your entrance upon our new life."

As Madame Tourville spoke, her eye rested upon the beautiful countenance, none the less attractive for its cast of brown, the rich black tresses, and the elegantly turned figure of her daughter, and unconsciously she fell into a day dream, in which she hoped, with anxious prudence, and pictured with a mother's pride, a brilliant destiny for her in a world which to herself was a Dorado of prosperity, as much as to Jaqueline it was a realm of poetry and romance.

Whilst each was busy with her own thoughts, a hasty message summoned Jaqueline to the chamber of Madame Desandr , who was strikingly and alarmingly changed. She held out her emaciated hand to her young friend, and addressed her in a broken voice:—"My fears are over, dear Jaqueline; you will not have to leave me alone, for this, I know, is my last day on earth. Promise that you will stay by me until you have closed my eyes, and that you will see my poor body laid in the grave."

The weeping and awe-struck girl promised compliance, and the sufferer proceeded, "thank you, my sweet child, thank you. I have sent for a notary, who will look after my effects when I am gone, and provide for me a decent and Christian burial. I have, by the goodness of Providence, plenty for that, and there will be a little left, which I confide to you. Take it, and have a stone placed over my dust, that when my poor boy comes to seek his mother, he may find where she rests. For you I have only one token of gratitude and affection, but that is the most precious thing now in my sight. It is my vase; for my sake cherish the plant I have so much loved, and may it long remain green to keep me in your memory."

Before the night had worn through, her presentiment was fulfilled. Her last whisper, as she convulsively grasped the hands of Jaqueline, was, "Eugene—Eugene—bless you, my own dear son!" and, in the happy illusion, she died with a smile on her lips.

No request of the dying woman was left unheeded, and after Jaqueline had seen her interred, she went, attended by the notary, who was an old friend of the deceased, to order a memorial stone for her grave.

"Would you desire, mademoiselle, to have any emblematical device on it?" asked the artisan.

Jaqueline reflected for a moment, and taking out her pencil, she sketched, on a scrap of paper, an expanded blossom of the night-flowering cereus. "It is a memento," she thought, "of her end, with love blooming beneath the shadows of death."

Madame Tourville was now notified that the American vessel in which she had secured passages for herself and daughter would sail in three or four days, and her diligence at her labours was redoubled. "You had better take leave of your cactus without further delay, my dear," said she, "it only interferes with your work."

"Take leave of it, mamma!" exclaimed Jaqueline, "what mean you?"

"You surely would not let it remain here, for the benefit or neglect of future lodgers," replied Madame Tourville composedly, "some of your young friends would be delighted with it as a parting souvenir, though I think you could best dispose of it by placing it in the hands of some floriculturist. You may then rely upon its being taken care of. The vase will make it valuable as a show plant, and the cuttings will afford a return for looking after it."

Jaqueline burst into tears. "Do you think, mamma, I could part with it!" said she, "that I could cast away the affectionate gift, and disobey the last request of the dying? Should I once do so, my conscience would not let me hope to prosper. No, dear mother, it shall go with me, even if I divide my last glass of water to support its verdure!"

Madame Tourville was too prudent to attempt to repress the amiable sensibility of her daughter, so she said no more. They commenced their voyage, and the same hour in which their vessel sailed from Havre, a packet was telegraphed, whose arrival, had it taken place sooner, would have had an important influence on their movements. It brought a letter from the brother of Madame Tourville, containing a draft on his banker, and requesting her to remain in Paris until farther advices from him, as he could not conveniently be in the northern states for some months to come.

The cereus accompanied them, of course, and to Jaqueline was a source of pleasure more than she had anticipated. She had little to amuse her, for her mother was sick during nearly the whole voyage, and on board there were few passengers, none of them ladies. Whilst moving it about on deck, for the benefit of the morning sun, and sitting beside it to shelter it from being stirred too roughly by the winds, she spent her happiest moments at sea, and, from constantly tending it, she grew to feel for it almost a human interest.

### CHAPTER III.

At length the port was reached, and Madame Tourville and her daughter, though they were disappointed in their hope of finding their relation among the crowd gathered at the landing, entered a carriage without any serious misgiving, and drove to a hotel recommended by the captain of the vessel. They lost no time in inquiring for the commercial house to whom their letters had still

been directed to be forwarded to the south, and they learned that their establishment was closed. One of the partners had absconded a few weeks before with a large amount of money, and the other, under plea of following him, had made a hasty departure to the west. They also received a hint that suspicions were strong of its being a case of fraudulent bankruptcy. This second disappointment seemed to be of more consequence, yet they hoped that the announcement of the arrival of the vessel, with their names on the list of passengers, would be sufficient to lead to a reunion.

They waited a week, and Madame Tourville grew alarmed. Her brother did not appear, and she advertised their arrival, but without success. Another week passed, and another, and, with much anxiety, she calculated their remaining funds. In her desire to provide her daughter with a handsome outfit, she had gone farther than her restricted circumstances warranted, and now, after the expenses of their voyage were paid, with those of boarding at a fashionable hotel, she had not quite a hundred dollars left. She communicated her anxiety to Jaqueline, saying, "We must try, my dear, to go to your uncle, since some unforeseen accident must have prevented him from coming for us."

"To Louisiana, mamma, on less than a hundred dollars!" exclaimed Jaqueline, unfolding a pocket map of the United States, and as they scanned the vast distance which lay between them and New Orleans, the point to which they would have had to direct themselves, they regarded each other in silent dismay.

"At all events," said the mother at last, "we must no longer remain where we are. Our little store is diminishing too rapidly to allow us to keep up our present expenses a day longer than is necessary. We must look out for cheaper lodgings until we receive intelligence of your uncle, whom we know not what may have befallen, and in the mean time, we must write to him of our situation."

"But how shall a letter reach him, dear mother? I do not remember that he ever named the place of his residence to us. Trusting altogether to receiving our letters through his agent here, he never said more than that it was something better than a hundred miles from New Orleans," and their difficulties seemed in no wise abated.

To find a new abode was their next consideration, and in this, too, they met with unexpected chagrin. They could meet with no spacious edifice, as in Paris, capable of holding a little community, and bestowing upon each division of it the dignity of an externally respectable establishment, as well as the advantages of privacy, at comparatively moderate cost. They must either take boarding, or set up an exclusive dwelling. What are called genteel lodgings their limited means denied them, and they were too refined and fastidious not to avoid the associations to which cheaper ones might have introduced them. They adopted, therefore, the other alternative, and rented, by the month, a very small house in a secluded part of the suburbs. To them

it appeared unpeppably mean and cheerless, but they consoled themselves with the hope of soon vacating it. They were obliged to pay a month's rent in advance, and after that had been done, and a little necessary furniture purchased, their narrow purse had shrunk to dimensions still more alarmingly small.

"A month ago, how little we thought to be reduced to this!" said Madame Tourville, looking despondingly around her new habitation; "though never rich, we were always before living in the midst of objects of elegance. Now we have not one to rest our eyes upon."

"You forget my beautiful vase, dear mamma," replied Jaqueline cheerfully, as she dusted its gilding, and placed it in the window, "we will have something to gratify our taste as long as we preserve it, and I am sure that the fresh green of my cereus will be more delightful to my eyes than ever, while there is so much that is gloomy about us."

Their arrival had taken place in autumn, and soon the approach of winter depressed them still more. Madame Tourville, in particular, was affected by the darkened skies and chilling winds which warned them of the change of climate they had encountered. She was, also, in a month or two, in despair about her brother, of whom, notwithstanding that she had entrusted the business of inquiring and advertising to an intelligence office, no tidings had been received. On Jaqueline devolved the double task of supporting her mother's spirits, and performing the duties of their house-keeping, both in doors and out. She fortunately spoke English well, having studied it as an accomplishment, while her mother knew little more than the few words she had acquired on shipboard, yet though she had no difficulty on this score, she was subjected to many annoyances, which, in her delicacy and want of experience she at first regarded as real troubles. She was stared at in wood-yards, jostled in market houses, and followed and shouted at by the rude boys of her obscure street, who were attracted by the peculiarity of her dress, some months in advance of the prevailing fashions. But she tried to bear these things patiently, and in time succeeded. She might even, in the elasticity of her youthful feelings, have been cheerful amidst her many privations, but one sad reality was constantly presenting itself to her—their means of subsistence were daily diminishing, and something must be done to renew them for the future.

Yet what could they do? Two delicate women, in a strange land, unused to either bodily or mental labour, without a single friend to give them a helping hand, or even to speak a word in their behalf? Teaching, as is usual, was the first thing thought of, but a few minutes reflection showed them how infeasible would be such an undertaking. Madame Tourville had long neglected the accomplishments of her youth, and, besides, her ignorance of English was an impediment not to be immediately overcome. As to Jaqueline, though she sung sweetly, and played with taste upon the guitar, yet



she was not sufficiently mistress of music to impart a knowledge of it to others, and though she painted prettily in water colours, it was merely as "a young lady," not as an artist. And they could find but little more hope on needle-work. They both sewed neatly, but it was without the skill and expedition acquired by practice from necessity. The minor articles of their wardrobe were all upon which they were accustomed to employ themselves, and though indeed they might have been able to do something at plain sewing, they knew not where to obtain it. There was not a face in the whole city familiar to them, except those of the neighbours around them, persons of the lower ranks, who, contrasting the elegant appearance of the unfortunate ladies with their evident poverty, were inclined to regard them with suspicion rather than favour.

Spring began to open upon them, and still their deliberations had been fruitless. They had now merely an amount sufficient to pay a month's rent, and to furnish them with the barest necessities, and they felt that a decided effort must indeed be ventured. The only one that seemed practicable was the sale of part of their wardrobe, which, though they possessed no jewelry of any considerable value, comprised many articles of dress both rich and handsome. This measure had been proposed by Jaqueline several months ago, on first witnessing her mother's despair of their being discovered by her uncle. She trusted that they might thus be enabled to raise a sum, sufficient with what they had still retained, to go to New Orleans, where their chances would be much more favourable, but Madame Tourville still cherished her brilliant visions for her daughter, and combated her suggestions with the hope that Providence would otherwise assist them. Now, however, she saw that, abandoning all idea of the journey, they must make the sacrifice for the supply of their daily wants. After a consultation as to what would prove the most saleable, Jaqueline set off with a couple of embroidered pelerines, that had never been worn, to a fancy store, which she had remarked and recollected from the circumstance of there being a French name on the sign. The owner of the shop really was a Frenchwoman, and to her, with a natural hope for sympathy and fair dealing, Jaqueline offered her muslins.

"You observe, madame," she remarked, "that they are of the very finest work, and though I brought them from Paris for my own use, they have never left the box in which they were purchased."

"Certainly, certainly, mademoiselle," replied Madame D., "but you must have had them some time, and the fashions in such things change so soon! Still, as you appear anxious to dispose of them, I will give you a fair offer. Of course you cannot ask as much as the Paris wholesale price, which would be about five dollars apiece."

"I would not be willing to part with them for less," said Jaqueline timidly. "I do not know what may have been the first cost, but I paid double that sum for them."

"Indeed! that was exorbitant, but we dealers understand such things better. I do not think that, calculating the advance of the fashions, I could offer you so much as five dollars, yet"—seeming to reflect a moment, "yet as a countrywoman, I suppose I must deal with you liberally, so we agree upon ten dollars for both."

"Ten dollars will pay a month's rent," thought Jaqueline, and she assented. The idea never struck the poor girl that if she had gone to a dealer less *au fait* to Paris wholesale prices, and merely acquainted with the rates of the American market, she would have fared much better. Whilst she was receiving her money a lady entered.

"What charming French-worked capes!" she exclaimed, "they are of the new style I have just heard of; pray what do you ask for them, Madame D.?"

"We have just received them, and the prices are not yet marked," replied the shopkeeper, not daring to name the value she intended to set on them before her unsuspecting dupe.

"Well, I shall examine them again in a few hours. I suppose you will not part with them sooner;" and the same day the fair customer took one of them at double the price Jaqueline had received for both.

"But I did not come to look at pelerines, Madame D.," said the lady, "I wish to know if you can undertake to have a set of chair seats worked for me."

"Ah, madame, we have so much work already on hands; however, if you offer liberal terms, I think I might engage some one who could do it for you."

Jaqueline paused, and leaned eagerly forward on the counter to listen.

"You know I am always willing to pay for my work, provided I can have it well done," said the lady, "I am particularly anxious about this, and shall allow abundance of time to have it properly executed, as my present set can last very well until the next season. I intend to have the new ones large, so that they will require a good deal of work. Have you any new patterns and worsteds?"

"Some just arrived; the most admirable patterns; see, madame."

"Charming! delightful! just the very things! I wish every chair to be different, so I shall have to select a number. The whole canvass is to be grounded in cream-colour, and on one thread. What lovely swans and doves and gazelles! I'll take all these; the flowers may be done like the ground,—on one thread, remember; and the animals must be tufted in rug stitch. I leave you to find all the materials, Madame D. Of course you will be as reasonable as possible; it is a large commission."

"Certainly, certainly, madame; but just yet I cannot decide upon terms. Against to-morrow I shall be ready, if I can find a hand to undertake it."

The customer withdrew, and Jaqueline, almost gasping for breath in her avidity to obtain employment, said hurriedly, "I entreat you, madame,

allow me to engage in it. I understand that kind of work very well."

The shopkeeper was pleased with the proposition, knowing that out of the poor girl's evident honesty and simplicity she might speculate readily, but dissembling her satisfaction, she asked hesitatingly, "How long will it take you to do one, mademoiselle?"

"A week. I am sure I can do one in a week," replied Jaqueline, and she thought to herself that with exertion she might do five in a month.

"But as you are a stranger, mademoiselle—of course I mean no offence—there is some risk. However, if you will leave in pledge the value of the materials, I will give you a trial. You cannot expect me to determine your wages till I have seen your work. When one piece is finished we can settle that."

Jaqueline agreed at once, and taking from her ten dollars the sum the woman demanded, she departed with a lightened heart to commence her work. Could her fingers have kept pace with her hopes and wishes, the labour would have been speedy indeed, but she soon found that the task was not so light as she had anticipated. She had much canvass to cover, a difficult pattern, with a momentarily recurring change of hues and shades, and she knew that the most careful exactness would be required. As the week closed, however, she completed the piece, and she could scarcely restrain her steps to a decorous measure while hastening with it to Madame D.'s.

The shopkeeper eyed it for a moment with real satisfaction, as, indeed, she could not have done otherwise, for a more beautiful specimen of work of the kind could not have been exhibited. "Very well done, mademoiselle, very creditable to you," she observed, "I shall not hesitate to entrust you with some of the others if we can agree as to your pay, though I do not think you can object to such as I offer; supposing I say two dollars apiece?"

Jaqueline knew little about the rates of manual labour, but she felt that it was not enough for what she had done, and hesitatingly she remarked so.

"I cannot give you more, mademoiselle," replied the woman, noticing her indecision, and Jaqueline, rather than lose a chance of employment, accepted the terms. "I may earn ten dollars a month," she said mentally, "and that is much to us now; it will keep a roof over our heads."

Hour after hour the industrious girl plied her needle, till her eyes grew weak, and her fingers incessantly ached, and when a month had passed, instead of the five pieces she had fondly anticipated, she had just completed the fourth. Her spirits sunk as she rolled it up, for to her the two dollars were still increasing in value. She was now called more frequently from her work than she had been at first, by domestic avocations, for the effects of a succession of severe colds, under which she had suffered during the winter, together with anxiety of mind, rendered her mother unfit to be of any assistance.

The next month, it was probable, her needle-work would advance still more slowly—so thought Jaqueline; they could not then afford their present rent, and her mother must be subjected to still greater privations, which would aggravate her present ill health, and perhaps occasion her death. With this terrible thought preying upon her mind, she hastened to her little chamber, and for a long time wept bitterly. But happily she knew whither to turn for consolation. She addressed herself to her Heavenly Father, begging that the more serious evils she dreaded might be averted, and that, under any dispensation, she might see her duty, and fulfil it. She felt herself strengthened and ready to look upon her situation with calmer feelings. In such a state a very slight cause may afford us comfort. When she returned to the little parlour, she involuntarily approached the cereus, which was standing on the window sill, bathed in a soft spring sunshine; she leaned over it to admire the transparent green of its branches, and among them found what had before escaped her notice, a young, healthy flower-bud. She welcomed it as an emblem of hope, and whilst promising herself the pleasure of seeing it expand under her care, she found a temporary relief from her excitement about the future.

#### CHAPTER IV.

Do our readers think we have forgotten our old friend Eugene Desandré? We have not, by any means, but to have followed him through his many adventures would have been to pass from one mishap, not to say actual misfortune, to another, until we should have been wearied. He was detained off Manila by fever, and, with the whole ship's company, had a narrow escape of life; he was in equal danger from an attack of Malay pirates; he was robbed of his ostrich feathers and his Spanish dollars, the fruits of the earlier part of his voyage, at Canton, and after various wanderings in South America, the end of two years found him, with health, temper and energy unimpaired, a candidate for fortune in New Orleans.

During all these wanderings he had had few opportunities of forwarding intelligence to his mother, and, indeed, it was so seldom he could have communicated any thing which would not have given her pain, that he sometimes forbore to avail himself of them when they offered. Several times, however, subsequent to leaving the Indian Ocean, he had written, but his letters were confided to other conveyances than well arranged post routes and packet ships, and, as we have seen, they never reached their destination. He could not, of course, be aware of this, and when a fear of it suggested itself, he took comfort from his determination that, at the end of the specified time, he would resume his place as the protector of his beloved parent, and from the hope that it would be under more favourable auspices.

Adverse as circumstances had generally proven towards him, Eugene was one who never found any difficulty in attracting friends. So, when he made his debut at New Orleans, he had means at command sufficient, at least, to allow him to appear in the habiliments of a gentleman. He had the advantages too of a warm and valuable recommendation. The captain of the vessel in which he had arrived, introduced him to a mercantile house of the highest respectability, and bespoke for him such interest and assistance as were due to a stranger of worth and ability. The wheel had reached the lucky turn at last.

The new acquaintances of Eugene promised to seek a situation for him, and, one morning, he called at their counting-house to ascertain his prospects. At the same time with himself, a gentleman entered, who was addressed as Monsieur Arnauld. He was an elderly man, of an abrupt and querulous manner, yet evidently, from the cordial and respectful reception of the merchants, a person of some consequence. "I have turned off my manager," said he, "and have come all the way hither, to you, my friends, to ask your assistance in getting a new one."

"What has happened?" inquired one of the partners, "I thought you were suited with one both trusty and capable."

"Oh, yes, yes, he did well enough to look after the crops, and keep the negroes in order, but in my bachelor establishment I want a man whom I can regard and treat as a companion. Now, this fellow was a clown, a ruffian, ill-bred, vulgar and ignorant. He disgusted me with his tobacco, enraged me with his bullying politics, and sickened me by drinking whiskey when he should have taken claret, besides perpetually annoying me by calling me a '*Frenchman*.'"

The merchant laughed. "You must make some allowance for his mother tongue," said he, "it has not naturalized the more elegant title of *François*."

"True, true—refinement must be difficult to a man unfortunate enough to be born to such a language, but you can furnish me with a substitute—one of our own countrymen,—I want no more natives."

"I think I can suit you well," replied the merchant, and approaching Eugene he advised him strongly to become an applicant for the situation. "You will have a fine salary, a pleasant home, and can make a warm and true friend of our countryman, notwithstanding his oddities," and our hero stepped forward, without hesitation, and was proposed.

Monsieur Arnauld scanned him sharply from head to foot, and seemed satisfied with the scrutiny. "I was determined to have a gentleman," said he, "but you look almost too much of one for the business; however, if you are willing to engage in it, that is your concern, not mine. You look honest also—if you are not, your face is too good for you, but time must decide that, and I need not trust you very far at first. Altogether I like your

appearance, my young friend. Have you had any experience in managing a plantation?"

Eugene, with difficulty restraining a smile at his singular address, replied that, having just arrived, he had not yet held any employment in the country.

"That is unlucky, but if my friend here will go security for your industry and integrity, I shall take the trouble to train you, at least give you a trial."

The merchants pledged themselves for the character of the young stranger, and Monsieur Arnauld seemed to rely upon their word.

"Then if you choose, Monsieur Desandr ," said he, "consider yourself engaged. To be sure it will interfere with some important arrangements of mine to get you into the way of looking after affairs about which you understand nothing, but I must submit to the necessity. Try to learn my mode of doing business as soon as possible, and I shall not grudge sacrificing a few months to you. I hope you will eventually suit me; if you do not exactly, you cannot be much worse than a rapacious savage of a Yankee. It will not take me long to find out whether I can trust you." And he requested Eugene to prepare himself for the journey to his plantation.

The estate was a fine one, delightfully located, and Monsieur Arnauld, in spite of some eccentricity, was liberal, considerate and indulgent towards his new assistant. With literary tastes and acquisitions, with musical talent, and many personal accomplishments, Eugene was, indeed, the very person to amuse the old gentleman in his retirement; while, added to these, his graceful and polished manners, his cheerfulness and amiable temper, won daily upon his admiration and esteem. Our young adventurer, as soon as he felt secure in his position, addressed to his mother a glowing account of his present prosperity, and his hopes for the future, begging her to decide upon making her home in the New World. He little dreamed that the eyes which would have rested with tears of joy upon every line of his affectionate missive, were now closed in death.

Eugene advanced rapidly in a knowledge of his new duties, which fell upon him unreservedly sooner than could have been anticipated. Monsieur Arnauld, who had not been long enough in America to be inured to the dangers of the climate, was violently seized with fever. Though he partially recovered from one attack, it left him so debilitated that he was unable to resume any charge of his affairs, and, at the end of a few months, was followed by another, from which there was no hope of his restoration. During this time Eugene managed his concerns with untiring fidelity, and nursed him with the watchful kindness of a woman.

"Your care has been in vain, dear Eugene," said the invalid, a few hours before he died, "but you will find it not unrewarded. I have left our friends in New Orleans the executors of my will, in which your services are remembered, and I wish you to be my agent in other things—to take a copy of it to France, and seek out my family there. I

shall leave letters for them, and for your guidance."

The next week saw our young friend in eager preparation to return to his native land, the legatee, by the will, of ten thousand dollars.

## CHAPTER V.

Madame Tourville's health and spirits began to mend under the influence of a more genial season, and Jaqueline was enabled still to devote much of her time to her needle-work. She was, one afternoon, sitting at the window of their little parlour, with her cactus beside her, the first day on which the fresh air had been permitted to enter freely, when, on raising her eyes from the canvass, she observed a stranger looking attentively in. He was a pleasant faced elderly gentleman, with gray hair and gold-rimmed spectacles, and he seemed to be waiting to attract her attention in order to address her.

"That is a very beautiful and flourishing cactus, miss," he remarked, "will you allow me the privilege of examining it more closely?"

Jaqueline assented gracefully, and opened the door to admit him.

"Is it of your own culture?" he inquired, after looking at it carefully.

"I brought it with me from Paris, sir, and have nursed it through the winter."

"You have been very successful. I noticed from the street that it had a flower-bud far advanced, and I wish much to possess a plant in that state. Would it be too great a liberty to ask if you have any objection to parting with it? I am willing to offer you a very liberal price, quadruple its intrinsic value, with equally favourable terms for the vase. It is for a particular occasion I desire it, and I will not hesitate about the cost."

Madame Tourville looked anxiously at her daughter. She had now determined to sell every article that could possibly be dispensed with, and disposed of, in the hope of raising a sum to take them to New Orleans, in some way, however humble, and the present proposition seemed to her nothing less than a God-send. But Jaqueline avoided her mother's eye, and replied firmly and seriously, "I cannot part with it, sir, though your offer is a temptation. It was the gift of a dying friend."

The gentleman had noticed the expression of Madame Tourville's face, but he seemed to respect the feelings of her daughter, and looking round the room as if to find a new subject of remark, he pointed to some little flower-drawings which hung on the walls. Jaqueline had executed them for her uncle, as specimens of her skill, previous to her voyage. "Those little paintings are admirably done, miss," said he, "they are your own work, I presume."

He was answered in the affirmative.

"They are very correct both in drawing and

colouring; the latter, in particular, is strikingly natural. I should think myself fortunate if I could obtain the services of three or four young ladies, equally skilful, to colour prints for me."

"For what purpose, sir?" asked Jaqueline earnestly.

"For a botanical and horticultural work of which I am the proprietor. I have a number of hands employed, and though none of them produce work equal to yours, they each earn several dollars a week."

Jaqueline's face flushed with the excitement of hope. "Perhaps, sir," she said solicitously, "you would have sufficient employment for me also. I should be glad to engage in work of the kind."

"You shall be welcome to it," and, after a pause, he added, "you must be fond of flowers, miss, and, if so, I pity you for being shut up in this dismal street, where there is not a green thing but the plant in this window to relieve your eyes. Do you ever walk past the — Street greenhouse and gardens?"

"Never, sir."

"You would find much there to delight you. I am the master of that establishment, and I so much love my shrubs and flowers, that it vexes and grieves me to have people about it who can neither enjoy nor perceive their beauties. In particular I have grown out of patience with a female assistant, whom I have long employed to show my flowers to my lady customers, and to answer their questions, and I am determined to discharge her whenever I can find a person to supply her place. The only pleasure she seems to derive from her office is receiving the ten or twelve dollars she earns a month by the service. Can you tell me, my dear young lady, of any person, fond like yourself of flowers, who would be willing to enter into it?"

Jaqueline's countenance encouraged him to go on, and he continued, "if you, yourself, for instance, would accept of it, it might be both a healthful and gratifying employment for you. There are but a few hours in the day in which you would be actively engaged, and during the remainder you might sit and colour engravings at your leisure. That you could do as well among my birds and flowers as here."

"My mother—if I could leave her," said Jaqueline.

"Why not do it, my love?" interrupted Madame Tourville, "I now do not require your constant presence; but I leave it to your judgment and inclination."

"Then, sir, I might try it for a time."

"Very well, miss, very well. I shall call to-morrow to learn when I may expect you, and to complete our arrangements. My name is Eckford." The old gentleman withdrew, not a little pleased with his success, for he had perceived at a glance that Jaqueline, with her beauty, modesty, and apparent taste, would be a valuable attendant in his elegant establishment.

"My dear, dear mamma," exclaimed Jaqueline,

and he was gone, throwing her arms round her mother's neck, while tears of joy and thankfulness stood on her cheeks. "I may soon earn enough to take us to uncle Henri, and that not discreditably. To my dear cereus, under Providence, we owe it all! What a blessing that I did not leave the gift of poor Madame Desandr  behind me!"

To Jaqueline her new employment was delightful in comparison with the tedious and sedentary labour to which, for weeks past, she had been subjected. The walks about the establishment were an agreeable recreation, and she was subjected to no unpleasant exposure; her intercourse was chiefly with her own sex, and Mr. Eckford's customers numbered the elite of the city. Her employer was a man of upright principles and benevolent feelings, and treated her with such consideration that he soon won her confidence. She related to him her story, and he promised to use his best endeavours to restore her to her uncle. As a means of effecting this, he immediately wrote to the south to make inquiries.

"I must let you into a little plan of mine, my dear Miss Tourville," said Mr. Eckford, one day: "I have for some time had it in my head to afford a novel entertainment to my customers, and at the same time to make a small speculation for myself. The season for theatres, concerts and other fashionable amusements, is over; and my project is to get up a horticultural exhibition of my own. By turning my green-houses into saloons, decorating them with flowers, lamps and chandeliers, supplying refreshments, such as ices, fruits and cream, from my country place, and having bouquets in abundance, for the beaux and belles to present to each other, I shall be able to make it quite a festival. I shall at least clear my own expenses, and by showing my superabundant stock to the best advantage, perhaps have an opportunity to dispose of it to a better profit than if I sent it to an auction-room. And I can, if you choose, also give you a little lift. I should like to have a *cereus grandifolia* to exhibit. None of mine show any sign of flowering, and it was a desire to have one for the occasion which led me, on our first interview, to make an offer for yours. Supposing I put off the f te until the night it will be ready to bloom? I can discover that without fail, and to see it burst would be a matter of curiosity to many. We would place it in a separate apartment, with a few other choice things, announce its being there, and demand a small extra fee for a sight of it, and all thus obtained should be your own. What think you of it?"

Expressing her approbation of his project, Jaqueline gratefully thanked him for his considerate kindness towards herself, and all was arranged accordingly. The festival, on its advertisement, was looked for with immediate favour, and succeeded beyond the most sanguine expectation. The rooms were thronged with the fairest and gayest of the city. The genius and taste of Mr. Eckford were applauded in terms unmeasured. His flowers were the loveliest, his lamps the most brilliant, his fruits

and ices the most delicious, his music the most exquisite; in short it was a triumph.

Jaqueline, in one of her beautiful Paris dresses, which, of course, she had never before worn, was there, under the protection of her mother, and though her good employer had protested against her appearing as any thing other than one of the company, she stationed herself in a little arbour, to assist in the light and graceful task of making bouquets. A pavilion had been fitted up for the display of her cactus, which expanded its blossom to perfection, to the delight of many spectators, and there were few persons present who did not avail themselves of the opportunity of examining it.

The eyes of our young heroine wandered momentarily to the curtains through which the crowd was passing, and had she not been too much absorbed in thinking of the little fortune flowing upon her to notice what was occurring around, she must have observed that she was an object of general attention. Her beauty, her gracefulness, and the tasteful elegance of her dress, attracted a degree of admiration greater than her modesty would have allowed her to enjoy, and she had more calls for flowers than she could answer. But the notice of one individual she could not have failed to perceive. He was a young man of handsome person and gentlemanlike air, who could readily have been distinguished as a countryman of her own. He moved about quite alone, communicating with no one, and when she perceived the expression of his countenance, on his first addressing her, she felt an innocent satisfaction in having excited an interest in a person who evidently, like herself, was a stranger in the assemblage, had the same feelings, and spoke the same language. But his demands for bouquets became frequent enough to have given rise to remark, and at length his approach always brought a blush to her face. She retired with her mother before the exhibition closed, and as she was departing she saw the stranger enter the pavilion of her cereus.

All impatience to ascertain the amount of her gains of the night before, which she intended to lay up for her southward journey, with the little hoard she was earning by colouring prints, Jaqueline swallowed her frugal breakfast at sunrise, and hastened to the green-house. The place was in confusion from clearing away the arrangements of the festival, and fearing that her cactus might be injured by some careless hand, she brought it forward with its withered blossom, and placed it in one of the front windows. As she did so, the young stranger, of whom she had involuntarily thought more than once since their meeting, presented himself before her. But instead of his expression of admiration and his air of gallantry, his countenance was anxious, and his manner excited. He addressed her hurriedly, inquiring if he could see the owner of the establishment?

She gravely replied that Mr. Eckford could hardly leave his dwelling for an hour or two.

"I sought him last night to make an inquiry

which interests me deeply, but he was so much engaged that I went away disappointed. You, probably, may be able to give me the information I desire—how he came into possession of the cereus on the window?"

"It is my property, sir, not Mr. Eckford's."

"And you, allow me to ask?"

"I brought it from Paris, where I received it as a memorial of a dying friend."

"The name of that friend?"

"Madame Desandr ." Jaqueline was terrified at the effect produced by her answer. The stranger turned ashy pale, and clasping his hands ejaculated, "My mother! Oh, my mother!" The next instant he had fallen as if lifeless before her. It was Eugene.

The screams of the affrighted girl collected the numerous attendants busied about the premises, and he was placed upon a settee. His first movement on recovering was to grasp the arm of Jaqueline. "Did you indeed say that she was dead?" he demanded, "did I hear you aright?" Her sorrowful countenance gave him no grounds for hope, and he added, looking round, "I must know all, but not here."

Jaqueline understood his feelings. "Oblige me by calling a carriage," said she to one of the men, "I will accompany this gentleman to my mother's," and in a few minutes they were there.

Jaqueline entered into a relation of all that she knew about his mother, and the bereaved son listened with the speechless intendment of despair. He made her repeat the expressions of fondness which she had heard accompanying his name, and, unmindful of observation, allowed the scalding tears to roll down his cheeks as if he had been a child. Madame Tourville sat by, and, without interrupting the touching narrative of her daughter, showed her sympathy by an occasional sob. At length, rising to go, he lifted the hand of Jaqueline to his lips. "Excuse me, mademoiselle," said he, "it is the hand which smoothed the dying pillow of my beloved mother. You have earned such gratitude as I shall not feel again through life. Let me ask your name."

"Jaqueline Tourville."

The look of anguish changed for a moment to one of astonishment. "Can it be possible?" he exclaimed, "yet it seems supposing what is too strange for reality. Was your name, madame, Clarinde Arnauld, and was Henri Arnauld your brother?"

"My brother?—yes. Can you tell me aught of him? It was he I come hither to seek."

"Then my errand is done. I have melancholy tidings to exchange for yours. This letter," taking one from his pocket book, "will prepare you to hear of an event to be deplored, but which could not be averted."

The letter was the last mental effort of Monsieur Arnauld, and its tone proved that he retained his singularity of character to his death. Presuming that his sister was still in Paris, he wrote—"I have before given you my reasons for wishing you to

remain where you are,—that on account of the affairs of my plantation I was unable to go to the north to receive you; after that, this illness, which is about to terminate my life, took hold of me. However, I suppose you do not regret the detention, as I ordered money enough to be furnished to you to supply you with abundant amusement, and that, they tell me, is pretty much all that you women care about. The bearer of this will give you a copy of my will. You will find that I have divided my possessions principally between you and Jaqueline, giving her, as she is likely to live the longer, the larger share. If she retain the plantation, you are to have one-third of its proceeds; if she sell it, your portion is to be one-third of the amount it may bring. This, my dear sister, you ought to consider a very liberal provision, as you will have no one but yourself to maintain out of it, for, of course, you have good sense enough to know that you are too old to marry again with propriety. But I would rather you would not part with the place, and, as I am now proving my affection for you both, you ought to let my wishes have some weight. It will produce a much larger income than any investment you could make of its value in Paris. But to make it profitable it will be necessary that you should come over and live on it yourselves. You must then have a proper person to manage it, and the most proper would be a son-in-law. Jaqueline ought to have a husband, and she could not find a better one, nor a more suitable, than the young man to whom I shall entrust the delivery of this letter. If Eugene Desandr  should take a fancy to her, which, I think, he can hardly resist, as Jaqueline is altogether a very charming young person, let him have her, by all means."

## CHAPTER VI.

After a lapse of three or four years, Mr. Eckford, who was a naturalist in general, passed, on a professional tour, through the southern states. By special as well as standing invitation, he stopped to make a visit at one of the most pleasant estates in Louisiana. It was, as our readers will have anticipated, the home of which Eugene and Jaqueline, now Madame Desandr , were the master and mistress. He found them living in a style which combined the elegance and luxury of European refinement, with all that constitutes comfort in the climate to which they were now naturalized. Eugene assiduously did the honours of the domain by showing him the mode of cultivation, and explaining the system of management by which he was rapidly adding to his fortune, and Jaqueline led him through the beautiful grounds and gardens by which the mansion was environed.

"Jaqueline need not blush at your compliments on her arrangements, my good sir," said Madame Tourville, "since it was from your instructions and observations that she derived the taste and knowledge to conceive and direct them."

One object, which, seen from the house, had a particularly fine effect, was a marble column standing amidst a group of orange and magnolia trees. To Mr. Eckford's inquiries Jaqueline answered, "It is the tomb of poor Madame Desandr , Eugene's mother. We had the monument executed, and her remains disinterred, to bring them with us, on our first visit to Paris after our marriage. You may observe that instead of the common funereal urn, the column is surmounted by a vase with foliage. Do you recognize it?"

"I do, indeed. It represents the cereus, which was the means of my introduction to you, and, if I mistake not, of your discovery by Monsieur Desandr ."

"True. Eugene borrowed the idea from the device of a simple slab, which I designed for the grave of his mother immediately after her decease. My dear cereus! I have enshrined it as the chiefest of my *penates*," pointing to a rich scagliola table on which it was standing. "In our distress it often afforded me comfort and hope, and seemed to draw good fortune to us by a magnetic power. And even now, I sometimes turn to it as to a monitor. When I am depressed, which, thanks to Providence, I have seldom reason to be, it reminds me how quickly evil may be followed by good; and when I am elated with prosperity, it warns me by my past experience, that a day may change the fairest prospects, and teaches me to be humble."

## THE OLD MAN IN THE GRAVEYARD.

BY ROBERT MORRIS.

"There is no darkness like the cloud of mind,  
On Grief's vain eye—the blindest of the blind!  
Which may not—dare not see—but turns aside  
To blackest shade—nor will endure a guide."—THE CORSAIR.

THERE are dark hours in the history of every human being,—periods of despondency and gloom, when life seems without a solitary ray of brightness, and all the future is shrouded in "mist and melancholy." At such times the spirit is depressed—the soul within is "involved in shadows," and it is in vain that we turn and turn, and endeavour to avoid the ominous thoughts that crowd upon the brain. They force themselves upon us, and all our efforts to shake off the despair of the moment are idle and fruitless. Phantom shapes flit before the imagination—dismal forebodings crowd upon the mind—evil thoughts obtrude upon us, and for a time we feel miserable. The aspect of the external world sometimes produces this disposition, and thus we may infer that suicides are more common during periods of protracted storm, than in less dreary seasons. Who has not felt the cheering influence of a burst of sunshine—an angel glance, as it were, from the blue skies above us, like a ray of prosperity amid the darkness and despair of a long season of vicissitude? There are indeed few who are not influenced in tone of mind and feeling by long periods of gloomy and unpleasant weather, with the heavens shut out from the human vision, and no cheerful object to call our thoughts from the earthliness, the dreariness of the prospect.

Nay,—there are few who have not in journeying through life felt Reason totter from her throne for a moment, and the demons of Crime and Despair assume the mastery,—few who have not looked with shuddering soul into the shadowy future, and hesitated upon the brink of that most pitiable of all crimes, self-murder. This to some may seem a wild and improbable theory! But call up the past, gentle reader, and ask if among its "faded hours," no dark and dreadful record can be discovered?—no moment when life itself seemed a burthen and a curse, and the present worse than the mysterious future? If such record may be traced, down upon your knees and thank God that the bitter cup was permitted to pass by—that the demon did not master the better spirit within—that the faith and hope of the human soul, were able to triumph over its sadness and despair. And if it may not—if you have been spared the "blackness and darkness" that I have attempted to describe—if the waters of life have not been embittered by gall and wormwood—if the coming hours have never seemed

pregnant with shame and anguish, beyond the power of human endurance, still down and return thanks to the Divine Source of all that is beneficent, that you have been saved such apprehended torment—such wretchedness of soul—such madness of despair. The curse of our first parents has thus far pressed upon you lightly. Be grateful, and invoke for the time to come the same exemption from the shadowy, the despairing, the insane, and the criminal. Who may tell what a day—what an hour may bring forth! Who point out the tree that may be riven by the next bolt from heaven! Who the form that may be laid low by the next flash of lightning!

But to our story. It was a gloomy afternoon in the month of August, that, restless, discontented, and unable to become interested in any volume at command, I sallied forth, scarcely knowing whither or with what object. I felt irritable and gloomy, and the more I exerted myself to shake off the evil spirit, the more did the sombre and the sad hover over and oppress me.

"It is the weather," I said to myself; "or perhaps I am not well—or perhaps some misfortune is at hand, and thus 'casts its shadow before.'"

And then a crowd of unhappy recollections passed before me, and discoloured and distorted my diseased or darkened fancy. Thus I wandered on, in any mood but one of contentment or joy, until I found myself in the immediate vicinity of a graveyard. Scarcely conscious of my course, I slowly ascended the few steps before the gateway, raised the latch, and was among the tombs. 'Thought seemed to assume a still more shadowy aspect, and as I moved slowly on, glancing upon one tombstone, and then upon another, and wondering within myself the history of the perishing bodies below, the vain world, with all its gaieties and follies—its temptations and its trials, passed from before the eye of mind. I stood with the mementos of the dead around me, and my thoughts wandered into the world of spirits. The ghosts of the departed flitted before me—the impalpable shapes of an eternal life—and thus at one moment I beheld the bright wings, and heard the glad voice of a seraph, and at another saw dark and flaming pinions, and heard shrieks of agony, groans of despair, and imprecations of blasphemy. Now the ghost of a dead relative appeared, and, with looks of kindness and



recognition, beckoned me to sunny groves, blue skies, and flashing water-falls; and now the ghastly shape of some well-remembered criminal, some gory murderer, passed before my excited mind, appalling and terrifying. I felt that I was awake, and in full life; but my mental faculties seemed in some degree beyond my control—the spiritual had obtained the mastery over the physical and intellectual, and I lingered midway between sleeping and waking existence. A sort of mental dream was upon me. I had given way too fully to the influence of the dark hour—had yielded too readily to the moodiness of my nature—had lost in some degree the control as well of my mental, as of my physical being.

Thus it was when, starting from the temporary stupor, I felt a hand upon my shoulder. In an instant the mist faded from my eyes. I turned, and recognized the features of an old and much-respected citizen. For a moment we gazed upon each other with looks of surprise and inquiry, as if wondering at such a meeting, and in such a place. I frankly confessed the condition of my own thoughts, and narrated the almost involuntary manner in which I had visited the graveyard.

"Beware," exclaimed the old man, "beware of the indulgence of such fancies. The human mind is too weak to be trusted even with those who have years and experience on their side. How much less, then, is it to be depended upon, when the imagination runs wild, and the youthful spirit soars above and beyond the bounds of reason—when we give a free scope to the fancy, and quitting earth, and the things of earth, lose ourselves in wild and visionary meditations, that lead we know not where?"

I looked somewhat abashed, for the manner rather than the matter of my companion, together with his keen and inquiring look into my eyes, gave rise to a suspicion that he apprehended some "fitful fever of the brain."

"But," he suddenly continued, "don't blush, young man—don't blush. There are few of us who do not wander at times, or who have not gone astray for a season, during the mazy pilgrimage of life, although few have the honesty to confess it."

I assured him that he was in error, at least as to my case. But he said he was somewhat of a monomaniac with regard to suicide—never heard of an instance of self-destruction without sympathizing deeply with the victim, and had visited the tombs on that occasion with the object of kneeling by the side of a fresh grave—"the grave," he added, and his voice softened as he spoke, "of youth, genius, and despair!"

"Indeed!" I exclaimed. "I should like to hear the story."

"That cannot be," he added; "at least, not for some years. It was the last request of the too sensitive victim. But," he continued, "I will briefly detail to you an incident in my own life, in order to explain to you my sympathy with, or rather pity for, the self-murderer—ay, the epithet is a harsh

one, but it is properly and justly applied. My own case, too, is not without its moral.

"I am an Englishman by birth—the only son of parents who doted upon me, and who, their means being limited, found it exceedingly difficult to secure for me such an education as they, in their parental fondness, considered suited to my natural gifts. I had, moreover, an only sister, with whom I divided their love, and for whose accomplishments, in connection with my own studies, they deprived themselves not only of all the luxuries, but many of the necessities of life. We grew up together in tenderness and affection, until I reached my nineteenth, and my sister her seventeenth year—when, in the space of a fortnight, both father and mother were summoned to another and, doubtless, a brighter world. My father was a mechanician, with feeble constitution; and had toiled beyond his physical powers. He was seized by a prevailing malady, and although he lingered but a few weeks, the incessant night-watches and other toils, which none but those who have attended long upon a sick room, in which the head of the family lay stretched upon the bed of death, can fully appreciate, reduced my mother to a shadow. In brief, she speedily followed him. The first blow was a dreadful one—but the second seemed still more fearful and appalling. I felt it more on account of my sister's condition than my own. She was a slight, fair, gentle, and beautiful being, and unfortunately, as the result showed, she had not been fitted by habit or education, to wrestle with the heartless world. She knew nothing of life—had mingled little with society, and was wholly inadequate to obtain a livelihood for herself, except in some easy and agreeable situation. This I soon discovered it was next to impossible to obtain for her. Our means were extremely limited. We were compelled, indeed, to dispose of the furniture and few trifles of silver-ware that had been hoarded up in our little family, with the object of maintaining, even for a short time, an appearance of gentility. For myself, I soon saw the lonely and wretched position I occupied, and also speedily discovered how utterly unfit I was to make my way through the crowd of such a metropolis as London. We had some friends, it is true, but they were for the most part in humble life, or at least unable to render any permanent or satisfactory assistance.

"Week after week, and month after month, we struggled to obtain situations. We travelled from one end of the great metropolis to the other at least a thousand times—feeling alone and deserted amidst the vast crowd, and fancying at last that we were pointed and scoffed at, because of our frequent appearance in the streets, and for reasons which at that time I could not comprehend. Probably we were deemed idle and worthless, and the very shyness and timidity which must have marked our conduct and appearance, doubtless formed a cause of scandal and distrust. Oh, God!—what a life of misery I lived during those few months! I saw my sister fading before me hour after hour—I saw

her without the means of satisfying her hunger—I saw her patient and resigned as an angel, and endeavouring to jest and make light even of the miserable condition of her apparel. A thousand demons would sometimes seem whispering to my soul. Crime and all its temptations appeared before me, and in various forms; and more than once some momentary companion in misery endeavoured to urge me over the precipice on which I felt I was standing. Nothing saved me but the early lessons of my lamented parents. *Their voices seemed to ring through my ears at every crisis, and when Resolution hesitated and faltered before the gnawings of hunger and the pleadings of Despair—when my better genius seemed about to fall and desert me, some bright gleam would penetrate the darkness, and the phantom shape of my mother whisper, ‘my son—my son—my only son!’*”

A tear trickled down the cheek of the old man, as the image of his maternal parent rose above the past, and the recollection of his early sufferings came back upon his memory.

“But,” he resumed, “no language can give an adequate idea of the horror of those moments. The turf was scarcely green above the grave of the authors of my existence, when my sister perished of poverty and want—mad, perfectly mad: her sufferings of body and mind having thrown her into a brain fever. Nay—she might have lived, had she been provided with adequate medical skill, and the comforts essential to the sick chamber. But by this time we were compelled to lodge in a damp cellar in Liverpool, having, as a last resort, proceeded thus far on our way to this country. We had heard much of it in the old world, and gathering up the last fragments of our broken fortunes—scarcely enough to pay for two berths in the steerage of an American ship—we seized, in our desolation and desperation, upon the hope of brighter prospects in the new world. Poor Annette! She bore up stoutly to the last, and could I have kept her alive until the sea breeze had fanned her fainting spirit, and the salt air nerved her feeble frame, she might at least have reached these shores. But her gentle heart broke beneath the vicissitudes of a cold and bitter world, and the fair young creature who had been brought up with so much tenderness and love, died in a loathsome cellar, with no being to cheer her last hours, save a wretched and miserable brother, who was scarcely able to secure to her lifeless form respectable burial. And yet, in the wisdom of an all-wise Providence, perhaps her early and painful death was a mercy. What could she have done—what might have been her destiny in a land of strangers?”

“In two months after I stood by the death-bed of my sister, I landed in these United States. I was then but twenty years of age, but I must have looked much older. I was haggard and worn, and the rosy hues of youth had utterly vanished from my features. On my way over, I had told my sad story to a fellow passenger, and on parting with me in New York, he gave me—more than he could afford,

poor fellow—a few dollars, to keep me, as he said, from the poor-house, or worse, until I should obtain employment. But what employment could I obtain? I knew no trade—possessed little strength of body—and had a vagabond look, more in consequence of the wretched plight of my wardrobe, than because of any revolting aspect of features. For three days I wandered through the streets of the great city of the new world, an object possibly of curiosity to some, probably of contempt to others. The fourth night I sought, as I fancied, the humbler part of the city, with the object of economizing my means as much as possible. And here another misfortune.

“During the fitful slumber incident to my condition, I was robbed of my last farthing! Imagine my situation. A stranger in a strange land, with a broken spirit, a despairing mind, and utterly penniless. My brain reeled with its reflections. Reason tottered, and despair gathered over my soul, black and terrible! Life seemed about to stop! The blood rushed madly through my veins! Want stood grim and horrible before me! Crime, also, appeared, and with a still more dreadful aspect! My own thoughts writhed like scorpions, and I felt as if my hour had come! In vain the images of the past struggled for a place in the frightful picture—in vain the faint voice of conscience whispered within me—in vain the still small voice cried ‘forbear—forbear!’ The various means of suicide crowded rapidly upon me—the knife—the dagger—poison in its many forms. ‘A single plunge,’ the demon whispered, ‘and the spirit will be at rest.’ The struggle was a dreadful one, but the future was black as night—not a ray rose above its midnight of horrors! The felon’s fate might be mine—the prison—the gallows—the gazing crowd, and the heartless executioner! ‘These, all these, may be avoided,’ urged the demon. ‘A single plunge!’ and with this thought, I nerved my trembling and agitated spirit, and moved towards the Hudson. Rapidly I hastened on. The world about was disregarded. The dark, deep waters of the river were now in view. A few steps more, and the spring might be made. And yet my resolution wavered not. A single plunge, I thought, and all will be over!

“A sharp shriek rang through the air. Starting, with an involuntary motion, I turned. Within a few yards of me was a lovely child, unconscious of danger, and crawling slowly and playfully across the street. A few yards further, and a carriage with two excited horses came dashing on—the driver in vain endeavouring to check the speed of the furious animals, or change their course. The terrified mother stood at a window above, and from her the shriek had come. Another instant, and it would have been too late! But thank God! that instant was all-sufficient. The danger was imminent, and the chances such as would have made any other than a madman pause. Such a pause would have been fatal. As quick as thought, I rushed to and rescued the child; and thus was not only an act of self-murder averted, but I became

in the hands of Providence, an instrument in preserving the life of an only son—a darling, cherished, idol boy.

“From that hour the shadow passed from my spirit. The fiend abandoned me. The bright features of my dead mother were again glassed by memory in my soul. Wretched and lonely as my condition was, I saw that it was still my duty to live—I saw that the meanest and most abject might in the hands of Providence, be wielded to noble uses.

“ ‘A change came over the spirit of my dream.’ My fortunes speedily improved. The father of the rescued boy became my patron and my friend. More than forty years have gone by, and I now am beyond the reach of worldly want. But can you wonder that with such an incident in my early history, my spirit will sometimes grow sad when visiting a solemn spot like this, and bending o’er the grave of some wretched victim of despair!”

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**THE PIC-NIC.**

Fleming, Jane T

*Godey's Magazine and Lady's Book* (1844-1848); Jun 1844; 28, American Periodicals

pg. 248



# THE PIC-NIC.

BY JANE T. FLEMING.

(See Plate.)

"HAVE you heard of Emily Hastings' arrival, Mrs. Stone?" said Jane Landor. "She came last night, and I am very anxious to see her, as I have heard so much about her. I suppose she will be at the pic-nic this afternoon?"

"Very probably. Where is it to be held?" asked Mrs. Stone.

"In that wild, romantic spot, near the Hermit's Cave, where the river bends so beautifully. We are to have a sail some distance down the stream, and then return and have a dance and collation in the grove near. I expect it will be perfectly delightful."

"Yes, that is a charming spot," said Mrs. Stone; "a favourite rendezvous for pleasure parties of all kinds. I have attended several there, and always enjoyed them. The first one was uncommonly delightful. Very amusing, too, some of the incidents were. I remember one especially, in which Emily Hastings was concerned, that caused a great deal of laughter at the time. She had just left school, and this was her first party. Though an uncommonly lovely and fascinating girl, with laughing blue eyes and a profusion of ringlets, witty too, withal, yet she was rather diffident and very sensitive to ridicule or sarcasm."

"When quite a child, she had a devoted admirer in Conrad Ernstein, the old bachelor sort of lawyer that you girls all like so much. His father, Dr. Ernstein, was a very near neighbour of Mr. Hast-

ings, and the families were very intimate. The children were almost inseparable, till Conrad was about sixteen, when he went to college. Before his departure, they exchanged vows of eternal friendship, unchangeable constancy, and plain gold rings. He wears his still, but I have never seen her's since this memorable party. She being at school and he engaged in pursuing his studies, they seldom met for seven or eight years, and when they returned finally to this village, they found themselves almost strangers to each other. He had paid such close and unremitting attention to his studies, that he had had no time for any thing else, and had grown up awkward, absent and embarrassed. Very delightful when, animated by conversation, he forgot himself; but oppressed with a greater share of *mauvaise honte* than I ever saw bestowed on one poor man before. Hardly a day passed but we heard of some new mishap or blunder of poor Ernstein; and yet withal, he was so good-natured, so ready to join in the laugh against himself, and so well-informed, that he was almost universally liked. Since his return, he had renewed his attentions to Emily, which did not please her at all, as she was made in this way a sharer in many of his blunders, and it turned the ridicule upon her in some degree."

"But what happened at this pic-nic you were speaking about?" asked Jane Landor, growing a little impatient.

"I will tell you all in good time. You know I

must always tell a story my own way," said Mrs. Stone. "I do not know," she continued, "that I ever saw Emily looking more lovely, or that Earnstein ever showed his devotion more plainly, or committed more annoying mistakes than he did on that day. Worse than all the other laughing observers of the scene, was a mischievous cousin John of Emily's, who was continually whispering praises in her ear of her 'preux chevalier, the graceful, gallant Dutchman,' till she was almost ready to take French leave of us all and go home; and I believe she would have done so if she had not been afraid that Earnstein would have followed her. There was a long plank thrown across part of the river, uniting the bank with a sort of projection from it, which extended some distance into the stream. Emily was walking rapidly and fearlessly across it, when Conrad perceiving her, and thinking she might become giddy, hastily followed to assist her if necessary. His heavy and hurried tread shook the unsteady bridge; it turned slightly, and Emily being totally unprepared, was thrown off. But there was no danger, as the water was not deep, and she could easily have extricated herself. However, Conrad was too much alarmed to perceive this, and springing after her, he seized her first by her arm and then by her dress, and pulled her to the shore. She was slightly injured by her fall against the rocks, and a little frightened, but more mortified and angry. I shall never forget her calm and quiet expression of scorn as she stood with her torn dress, dishevelled hair and scratched hands, listening to his profuse apologies. I presume there must have been some sort of a quarrel afterwards, as he ceased his attentions suddenly; and whenever they met they spoke to each other, it is true, but very coldly."

"But I should never suspect that Mr. Earnstein could be so diffident," said Jane Landor.

"Oh! that was ten years ago. A year or two in society cured all that. He is quite a man of the world now, comparatively."

"Is Emily as pretty as ever?" asked Jane Landor. "Somewhat *passé*," replied Mrs. Stone, "but still very lovely and interesting."

"But why has she never been married?" continued Miss Landor.

"I don't know. She was quite a belle here for some two or three years. Her father's income was large, and she travelled a great deal. She always seemed to be surrounded by admirers, and to care very little about them. When her father died he left them quite poor, and she, to assist her mother in the education of her younger brothers and sisters, accepted a situation as teacher in B., and has been there ever since, returning only once a year to pass a few of the summer weeks with her mother. The first time that she came back, a very handsome gentleman accompanied her, and was said to be very much attached to her; but that could hardly be, for some months after we heard that her sister was engaged to him, and they are now married. He is quite wealthy, I believe."

"A gentleman by the name of Hartley, a widower, came this morning to the Columbian, I was told, ostensibly for the purpose of recruiting his health by a few weeks' residence in the country, but really for the sake of prosecuting his addresses to Emily Hastings," said Jane Landor.

"Very probably," replied Mrs. Stone. "She is animated and intelligent—just the kind of person that pleases generally. But I am making you a most unconscionable call, and must hurry home or Mr. Stone will be out of all patience waiting for his dinner. Good morning." And the talkative lady departed.

The persons invited to the pic-nic assembled quite early. The day could not have been lovelier, and though it was quite warm, yet the shade of the trees and the cool breeze from the river rendered the air delightful.

Emily Hastings was there, though she went quite unwillingly, as the scene recalled unpleasant reminiscences. Yet as her brothers and sisters refused to go without her, she, as she had done for years, sacrificed all feelings of self for their pleasure. Graceful, easy and animated, she was the life of any party; and though at times a shade of sorrow would pass over her face, it flitted so rapidly that it was unnoticed. But when her countenance was perfectly at rest, there were some lines of sorrow and care apparent—something that showed that bitter thought had long been a constant companion. But it was seldom this was observed, save by a curious reader of physiognomies.

Mr. Hartley was there too. He looked about forty, tall, portly, and rather handsome—not over sensitive, nor blessed with a keen perception of the feelings of others. Very attentive he was, though any observer could see that his profusion of soft words was all lost, and that his constant attendance seemed a great annoyance to the object of his devotions.

Conrad Earnstein of course was there. No party of any kind had been given for years without him to assist, by his ready good nature, his merry jests and his joyous participation in its amusements, in its success. He looked very well, though a little more serious than was his wont. He showed the marks of time slightly. Ten years will leave their traces, and he had grown thin, and his hair had fallen from his temples. But though those ten years had robbed him of somewhat, they had also been bountiful givers. Confidence, gentleness, and the art of talking agreeable nonsense, had been a few among his many attainments.

A little bridge had replaced the plank, and in the still moonlight, Emily stood leaning on the railing, gazing earnestly into the depths of the silvery and sparkling waters.

"Emily!" said some one beside her. She started, but did not raise her eyes immediately, for she knew the voice, though years had flown since she had heard it, save mingling with others in the common conversation.

"Do you remember, Emily, the first pic-nic we attended here?" continued Earnstein.

"Yes, perfectly," said Emily; and then she continued hastily, laughing to hide the embarrassment, "and how you threw me into the water and pulled me out again, and how frightened you were, and how angry I was. I was just thinking of it all as I was standing here. How beautifully still every thing seems; and to see the dancers in the distance, and the groups rambling here and there among the trees, might almost make one fancy one's self in Arcadia. There is Mrs. Stone walking with mother—shall we join them?"

"Have you forgotten, Emily," continued Earnstein, apparently without having heard her request, "what you said to me the day after your unfortunate fall?"

"Forgotten? No," said she, with a sudden start; and Earnstein saw, or fancied he saw, a tear glittering on her cheek.

"Emily," said he again, "do you——"

But his question was cut short by Mr. Hartley, who joined them just then, saying, carelessly—

"A beautiful view this. You have been admiring it a long time, Miss Hastings; and I do not wonder. I could look at it for hours. But your mother sent me to tell you that it is growing too damp for you by the river; and here are your brother and sister coming to escort you back."

The party soon afterwards dispersed—Mr. Hartley claiming as if of right a place by Miss Hastings' side on her return.

The next morning rose bright and beautiful, and all day long old and new acquaintances were coming in an uninterrupted stream to welcome the new arrival. But though she played her part well in the ceremonies of the day, she seemed out of spirits; tired, her mother said, with the journey and the walk the day before. By eight, however, the visitants had all departed, the callers had ceased, and, to her great relief, she was left with no one but Mr. Hartley, who, to say the truth, had seldom left her during the day, seeming determined, as if, by the most unremitting attentions he could do so, to gain his suit. She left him with her mother for a moment, and stood in the porch looking sadly and longingly into the distance. Earnstein had not been among her visitors that day. He was absent on business, they said, and would not return before the morrow. While she stood there, her brother came bounding out, and stopping to throw his arms around her neck, he noticed her dejection. She laughed at his questions about the cause, and when he told her that he was going to walk to the Hermit's Cave to find his skotch book, which he had

left there the preceding day, and wished she would go with him, for he had a great deal to say to her, she willingly consented, forgetting entirely poor Mr. Hartley; and on their way, Charles poured forth with all a boy's enthusiasm his hopes and wishes.

He should enter college, he said, in a few weeks, and afterwards he was going to study law. Mr. Earnstein had said that he must study with him. "I like him so much, don't you, sister?" said Charles, warmly; "he has been so kind to me." And then, without waiting for an answer, he said, "How I wish you could stay at home always. We are so much happier when you are here—mother is in so much better spirits. When I am a man I intend to buy back our old place, and we will all live there together again."

While talking thus, they had reached the bridge, Charles not observing that Emily had not spoken since they left the house. Her heart was very heavy;—one of those unaccountable fits of depression had come over her, and, contrary to her wont, she had yielded to its influence. It seemed as if the future had no blessings in store for her, and that as far as she herself was concerned, she would willingly have laid her head beneath the turf sod at her feet.

"It is a hard walk up that hill, sister Emily," said Charles; "would you be afraid to stay here till I can go—it won't take me ten minutes. But there is Mr. Earnstein; I'll call him to stay with you."

And before his sister could forbid him, Charles called loudly to a person near, who proved to be, indeed, Mr. Earnstein, as he approached hastily, saying he would remain with great pleasure, and hoped Charles would not hurry himself. But though he was not long absent, yet there was time enough for the sentence interrupted the night before to be completed, and an answer entirely satisfactory to be returned.

And when, on their return, Mrs. Hastings expressed some surprise at their walk in the night air, and Mr. Hartley looked his astonishment, Charles seemed to be the only person who thought of excusing himself from the charge of imprudence.

Need I tell what was the all-important question and answer, or that Charles was gratified by seeing his mother again presiding over their old place; and though Emily was not with them exactly, yet, as their gardens formed the only barrier, their separation was little felt.